THE ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

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COMMENTARY
Sir Charles Petrie, Bt.

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Henri Massis

HOW MANY CHILDREN?
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THE COMMUNAL GUILLEMOT
Richard Perry

THE LYSENKO AFFAIR
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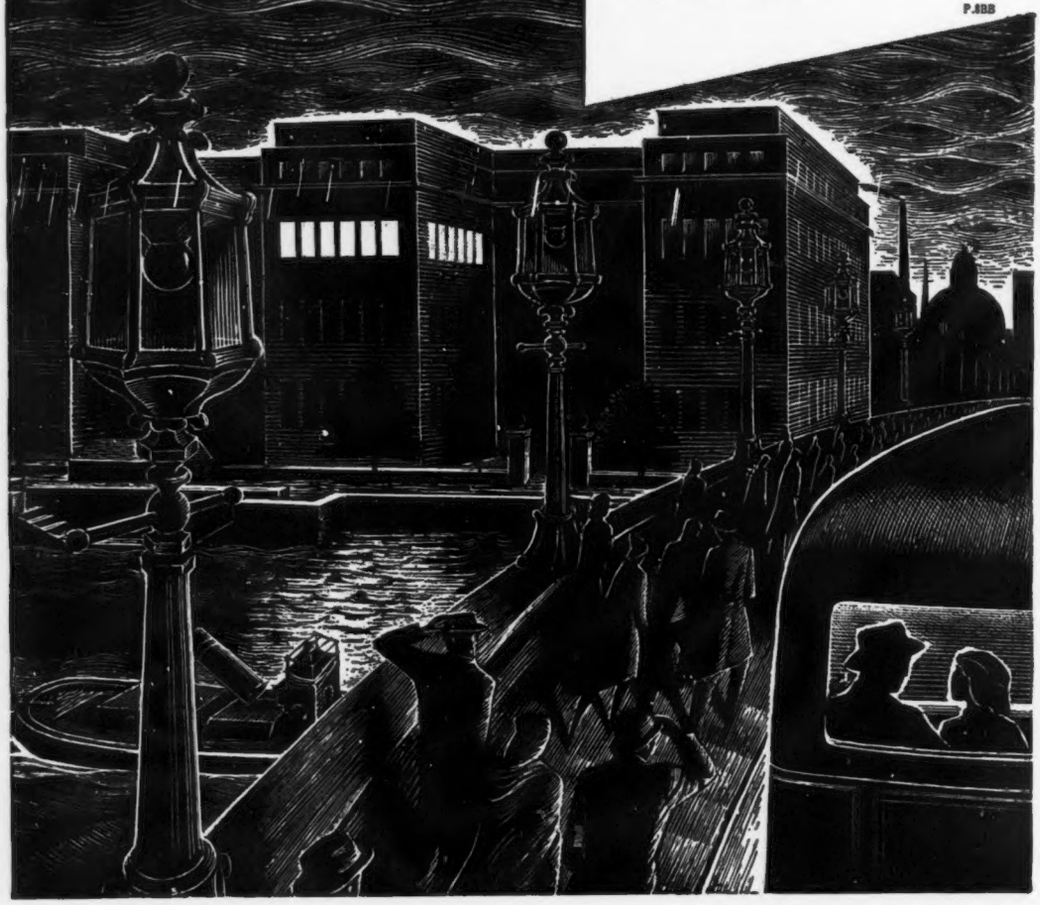

THE VOLUME III. No. 4

THE ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

Edited by DOUGLAS JERROLD

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THE
ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

OCTOBER COMMENTARY

MORE than usual, the holiday season this year has been a form of escapism for most of us. We did not know when we went away what the autumn might hold in store, though we suspected that it would probably be unpleasant, and so we decided to dismiss politics and politicians from our minds until we returned to our normal daily round. Those who were really determined to enjoy themselves avoided reading the newspapers, at any rate the English ones. Now, whether we like it or not (and most of us do not like it at all), we must face realities. What has been happening while the holiday-makers have had no other thought than the gratification of their own desires?

First of all there has been the meeting at Strasbourg of a number of politicians and a few statesmen from some Western and Southern European countries, the representatives of Spain being notable for their enforced absence, in the hope of finding some common ground upon which to create a federation of non-Communist states. Next, there were the elections in Western Germany, when Socialism sustained a reverse of which the repercussions are still being felt in Transport House. Then came the visit of Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin to Washington on the seventh or eighth most historic mission since the war, with the resulting *volte face* of the devaluation of the pound. Lastly, behind all these events has been heard the ever-increasing sound of the scenery being shifted in preparation for the raising of the curtain upon the British General Election. It may not be without interest to look somewhat more closely at these happenings.

SOME little time will clearly have to elapse, and perhaps another meeting or two take place, before it is possible to decide whether or not Western Union is going to become effective. Both the optimist and the pessimist can derive satisfaction from the Strasbourg gathering. There was far too much shouting for the echo at home on the part of some delegates, not least among certain of the British and Irish ones, but the Assembly did develop a corporate spirit during the course of its sessions, and Sir David Maxwell Fyfe's committee on Human Rights would certainly appear to have done useful work, though naturally in face of the usual Socialist opposition when anything of this nature is under discussion. Indeed, the ex-Attorney General and Mr. Harold Macmillan were by universal admission among the outstanding figures in the Assembly.

What is abundantly clear is that it was a mistake to confine membership to professional politicians chosen on party lines. A good leavening of scholars, economists, scientists, and business men would have contributed greatly to the reality of the proceedings. What are wanted on these occasions are men who are prepared and accustomed to look ten or twenty years ahead, and this is

very rarely the case with the professional politician whose vision is usually limited by the next election. One wonders, indeed, how many of the delegates, other than the French, could have found Strasbourg on the map before they were required to go there. Taken by and large, they were not an impressive collection, and the inadequacy of the supporters of the British Government was most marked.

These observations do not only apply to the Strasbourg gathering, and they are being made with increasing frequency all over the free world. The existing chaos is largely the work of the professional politician, who has no experience in any other field to guide him, and it has never been good policy to call upon Beelzebub to cast out Beelzebub. The men who made the great international settlements of the past were possessed of wide knowledge and culture far outside the narrow sphere of party politics. If men of this calibre are not to be found in sufficient numbers to-day among the ranks of the politicians then they must be recruited from outside. The presence of Sir Richard Livingstone or Professor G. M. Trevelyan at Strasbourg would have been worth that of a dozen minor politicians. Two wars in one generation have not been fought to make the world safe for the party hack.

THE refusal to extend an invitation to Spain and Portugal to be represented at Strasbourg was either tragic or comic, according to the point of view from which it is regarded. It is tragic because it shows how party differences are preventing the formation of a united front against the common enemy, just as in earlier centuries the Turk was allowed to become master of a large part of Europe solely because the Western Powers preferred to quarrel among themselves rather than to combine against him. It is comic because it meant that the leading opponents of Communism were excluded from an anti-Communist gathering. One wonders if Mr. Bevin will ever learn that the foreign policy of a country cannot be based upon the likes and dislikes of individuals.

In view, therefore, of the various drawbacks attendant upon the inception of Western Union, the fact that the gathering at Strasbourg took place at all was a notable achievement, and the delegates did well to take a stand against any domination by their official colleagues. At the same time it must never be forgotten that this meeting marks a beginning, not an end: United Europe will be only an empty phrase until the Assembly contains the representatives of a free Czechoslovakia, a free Hungary, a free Rumania, a free Yugoslavia, a free Bulgaria, a free Ukraine, and the free Baltic States.

THE problems of Germany, like the poor, are always with us, and their solution is never an easy matter. The result of the elections in the Western Reich is certainly a subject for congratulation, and the triumph of Dr. Adenhauer is seen to be the more complete when it is remembered that they were held under the system of Proportional Representation. It is an open secret that the defeat of the Social Democrats was a severe blow to Mr. Attlee and his colleagues, for over a long period they had been favoured in every way by the British Government: their lack of support was due to the memory of their poor showing when they were in power in the days of the Weimar Republic, and to the pitiful exhibition made by their co-religionists in Prague and elsewhere in the face of Communist pressure.

Sooner or later Germany must take her place at the council table with the other Western Union Powers, and Mr. Churchill was quite right in taking the line that this should be sooner rather than later. We do not want a repetition of the undignified wrangles of 1926. At the same time the problem has not been rendered any easier of solution by the apparent blindness of the British Government to the dangers of recreating a centralized German State, for, as Mr. Douglas Jerrold wrote in this place last month, "any German

representation at Strasbourg should be by the states and not through the representatives of Western Germany as a whole". By all means, then, let there be Germans at the next meeting, but let them come as Bavarians, Hessians, Hanoverians, and Rhinelanders, and not as delegates of a unified Reich.

At the same time the new German Government must show that it is worthy of the confidence of the rest of the world, and it has to be admitted that some of its leading supporters have given cause for alarm by the nature of their utterances. A little whistling to keep up the courage is natural and venial, but there are very definite limits to this sort of thing, and they have been reached. German Parliamentary politicians would do well to realize that they have everything to gain, and nothing to lose, by moderation, for in vituperation they will soon be outdistanced by the heirs of Hitler and Goebbels, while their future depends on the support of the Allies, who are understandably nervous on this score in the light of previous experience.

AS in the case of Strasbourg, so in that of the Washington discussions, some time must elapse before it is possible to decide whether anything important really happened there at all, and even the devaluation of the pound must be so regarded. We have seen so many "new dawns" hailed by the present Government, only to find the sky almost immediately overcast again, that we are sceptical, and in the present instance we are inclined to be more dubious than usual in view of the fact that the Socialist shop-window is so obviously being dressed for the coming General Election.

One somewhat remarkable conclusion has, apparently, been reached, and it is that every encouragement should be given to the American private investor to put money into the British Empire. It is not easy to see how this decision can be correlated with the socialization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange to which the Government is committed. What happens to the American who wants to invest in the Prudential, or in Tate and Lyle? Either Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin agreed to this with their tongues in their cheeks, or they are committed to persuading their colleagues to abandon any further schemes of nationalization if they are again returned to office.

WHAT was at issue at Washington, and what is becoming one of the main international problems of the day, is, can Great Britain remain a first-class Power? Those who are not in touch with contemporary opinion abroad, and that is the overwhelming majority of people in this country to-day, would probably be horrified if they were told that everywhere there is a growing tendency to answer the question in the negative. For the most part the British Press, whatever its political complexion, oozes complacency, and calls upon its readers to pat themselves on the back for the courage which they display in putting up with discomforts that the rest of the world merely considers them fools for tolerating at all. When Mr. Strachey patronizingly makes a "concession", does it never occur to him that the continued existence of the Ministry of Food is in itself a condemnation of the administration of which he is a member? Under a competent government there would be so much food that rationing by now would be unnecessary.

A century ago England was the workshop of the world; under our present rulers it will soon become the workhouse. Elsewhere in this number Mr. Douglas Jerrold and Mr. Christopher Hollis, M.P. deal with certain alarming aspects of the Report of the Royal Commission on Population, and competent American observers take a most pessimistic view of the future of England unless she can regain her industrial pre-eminence. It is widely stated that at least fifteen millions of the present population will be surplus to requirement in the circumstances of to-morrow, and that they will either have to

emigrate or the whole standard of living be reduced to the workhouse level.

IT is no solution to claim that England is now a welfare state with full employment, for the assertion, even if true, is beside the point. The welfare state, such as it is, has been established, and is largely being run, on borrowed money from America and the realization of capital assets, such as death duties, at home. Neither source of revenue will continue indefinitely, and when they come to an end so will the welfare state. All of which is not an argument against social services, but merely against the way in which they are at present run in this country. As readers will remember, on many occasions this Review has advocated other and more satisfactory methods of providing social services than by relying on borrowed money and the use of capital.

"Full employment" is also a good deal of a fiction, for although there are nominally far more people employed than was the case ten or twelve years ago they are individually doing less work, so that the ouput is the same where the national economy is concerned, while the cost is greater. To have two men working four hours a day each rather than one man working for eight hours may read like full employment for both of them, but it is going to increase enormously the cost of the work they are doing.

British Railways are a case in point. The recent report of the Transport Commission reveals that there are nearly 100,000 more railwaymen to-day than there were in 1938, presumably to do the same or less work than was done then. The result is that railway travel has become too expensive for an increasing number of pockets, and, even with increased charges, the Conciliation Board has been unable to recommend any rise in the flat rate of wages paid to the railwaymen. "Full employment", in effect, is merely concealed unemployment, as will soon become apparent.

NOT only is recovery impossible, but further decline is inevitable, unless the proper remedies are applied, and they all come to one thing—much harder work. If a nation is called upon to engage in two major wars in thirty years it cannot expect to be better, or anything like as well, off at the end of that time. Our economy was unbalanced by the Industrial Revolution more completely than that of any other country, and we cannot easily de-industrialize without precipitating the very disaster that we are trying to avoid. Work, not juggling with figures at Washington, is the only way to maintain the standard of living which our fathers achieved by the sweat of their brows.

It is only fair to admit that some members of the present administration have come to realize this, for there really is such a thing as a reformed poacher. The seller's market has gone, and in the changed conditions of to-day the slogans which sounded so attractive at the General Election of 1945 have become meaningless. The more honest of Mr. Attlee's colleagues are on the horns of the proverbial dilemma: if they do what they know to be right they risk alienating the Socialist rank-and-file; if they continue to lie, they will reap the whirlwind if they get back into office. It is not a pretty choice.

THERE is another aspect to be considered, and that is the Communist challenge on the industrial front. The ridiculously small polls of Communist candidates at Parliamentary and local elections must not be allowed to blind us to Communist influence in industrial disputes, and the Socialist leaders in the T.U.C. are certainly under no illusions on this score, as has recently been shown.

With the Socialist party in office, and so many industries nationalized, the Trades Union leaders tend in increasing numbers to be on the other side of the barricade, and so to lose touch with their erstwhile followers. This is the key to the repeated unofficial strikes. In these circumstances along comes the

Communist, and the discontented worker, unmindful of the sad fate of the young lady of Riga, is quite prepared to accept his offer of help, arguing along these lines—"Of course, I don't like his politics, but if he can get an extra bob or two a day for me, when my own leaders won't or can't, then he's my man." This, incidentally, has been the experience of Australia.

Members of the Government have seen this particular red light, but in view of the financial and economic position of the country it is not easy for them to decide what course to pursue. They are eventually doomed if they lose control of the Unions which are the backbone of the Socialist party, and which contribute so large a part of the funds; equally any prolongation of the existing *malaise*, with its strikes and "go-slow" methods, will finally alienate that floating black-coated vote which is essential to success at the polls.

SUCH, in the main, is the situation in which the last Conservative Party Conference before the General Election will assemble at Earl's Court on the 12th of this month. It will meet with the delegates full of fight and optimistic as to their chances. It is many years since the Conservative party has been as united as it is to-day, and differences regarding leadership and policy have been healed. Those who deny this are either consciously or unconsciously indulging in Socialist propaganda.

The main task of the coming conference will be to discuss the suggestions put forward in *The Right Road for Britain*, for, unlike their opponents, the Tory leaders want to hear the views of their rank-and-file, and to have their policy endorsed by them. It may well be that as a result of these discussions some paragraphs will have to be re-drafted, and among them will probably be the proposals affecting the nationalized industries, especially transport. One problem it is most sincerely to be hoped will be thoroughly thrashed out in all its implications, and that is Defence, for there will be plenty of delegates present who will be well qualified to express their opinion on the subject.

IT is not often in politics that the opportunity occurs to do what is both statesmanlike and popular, but if the Conservative party will come out for the abolition of compulsory military service—compulsory military training is another matter—it will not only give the country that effective armed force which is so conspicuously lacking but it will almost certainly ensure victory at the coming General Election. National Service, to use the term under which conscription is now masked, is not providing what is required, and it is rapidly undermining the Regular Army. A lot of men in uniform do not constitute an army anyhow.

It is upon the Regular Army, our first line of land defence, that we must concentrate, and it is here that the record of the present Government is particularly bad. Whether through ignorance, bad advice from the experts, or political prejudice the Regular Army has been allowed by ministers to become the Cinderella of the Armed Forces of the Crown, and the danger of such a state of affairs could hardly be over-estimated.

In July of last year a special number of this Review was published dealing with the whole problem of Defence, and all the arguments put forward in its pages are valid to-day, while the need for reform is certainly no less urgent. The section devoted to the subject in *The Right Road for Britain* displays a sound appreciation of the facts of the case, but the writer hesitates to push his argument to its logical conclusion, which is the abolition of National Service in its existing form.

BUT, it will be objected, you will never get the men without compulsion; to which the answer is that we have never tried, and the delegates at Earl's Court will have the opportunity of pressing their leaders for a definite policy. Nor is it difficult to see upon what lines this policy should be shaped. The

basis must be security. When a man goes into the Regular Army, whether with or without a commission, he must be satisfied that he has a job for life. After his colour service is over congenial work must be found for him, and the nationalized industries afford ample scope in this connection. Provide security, and the Regular Army will get its men: restore the old amenities, and it will get its officers.

There is no need to stress the chaos which National Service is introducing into the social and economic life of the country. On every side one hears complaints to the effect that boys leaving school at the age of fifteen will not—quite naturally—settle down to work when they know that in three years they are going to be conscripted for eighteen months. In the past the vast majority of young men were well settled in life by the age of twenty-one, but now they are only beginning it, and if they are going to a university they will be in the middle twenties before they begin to earn their own living. In effect, National Service is economically unsound, and it is not providing the country with the Defence Forces required.

TO pass from the particular to the general, it is to be hoped that the delegates at Earl's Court this month will be influenced by the spirit as well as by the letter of *The Right Road for Britain*, that is to say that they will concentrate upon a long-term policy rather than try to catch votes by exploiting this or that sudden crisis. What they have to do is to impress upon the electorate that there can be no real recovery under Socialism, and they certainly do not lack examples to support their arguments on this score. They have also to show that they can supply the answer which the Government does not possess.

It is here that a word of praise is due to the Conservative leaders for the attitude they have adopted during the controversies we have been considering. They played their part manfully at Strasbourg, and they have shown a notable restraint in their comments both upon the Washington negotiations and the growing industrial unrest at home. They are rightly ignoring side-issues, and concentrating upon the fight against Socialist totalitarianism as such. This attitude may not always be pleasing to the firebrands, but it will pay in the end.

CHARLES PETRIE.

SONG FOR MY MOTHER

MY mother sits inside the sun
And sews a song of daffodils;
My mother sits inside the hills
And knits a house for everyone.

MARY WYKEHAM.

THE ETERNAL GERMAN PROBLEM

By HENRI MASSIS*

"PEACE can never be achieved, nor will it endure, until it is established in Germany, with regard to Germany and taking Germany into account." Thus wrote Ernst Erich Noth, one of the German writers who foresaw the last war and who, as far back as 1933, warned us against the outcome of Hitler's activities.

Even now that Germany is defeated she remains the pivot of world peace, as can be seen by the fact that she is the principal source of the discords and antagonisms between the late Allies. It is in Germany that the game is set and will be played. There it will be decided whether our world is to break up or not, whether the war of which we hear so much, perhaps too much, will or will not take place. The German question is always one of war or peace.

Many things have changed with the years, but Germany least among them. In spite of her "vital dynamism" and of that need for change which periodically disturbs her, Germany is spiritually and intellectually static, an immobile nation which can neither evolve nor progress because she cannot rest on the realization of what she *is*. We hear a great deal about denazification and the need to re-educate morally the German people. The possibility of education, however, depends upon an acceptance of a certain idea of the essence of man which is precisely what Germans do not understand and indeed take pride in not understanding. The concept of humanity evokes no immediate response in their consciousness. Fichte has remarked upon this in terms which are singularly revealing: "If you use the word *Menschlichkeit* instead of the word *Humanität* to a German he will understand immediately. But he would add 'there is not a great deal in being a man rather than a wild beast'. This is where a German differs from a Latin and for this reason. The word *Humanität* in his language connotes merely the natural order, it has never become, as with the Latin peoples, the symbol of something transcending the natural order."

THE *idea* of man, on which is based the very conception of civilization, cannot find a place in the *Weltanschauung* of Germany, which has always identified man with the animal order. Therefore it is not enough to "denazify" Germany, she needs to be "de-Germanized", for it is not a question of a passing madness but of effecting a fundamental change. The germ of the evil (Keim des Bösen) is anterior to Nazism, as Jaspers has pointed out. "We must go back" said Ernst Noth, much farther in history than that ridiculously arbitrary date 1938, back to the source of the dangerous dreams of a tragic people. It is necessary to change the colour of the German mind.

The political error which we are making to-day, even as we did yesterday, is that of persistently regarding the Germans as in all essentials like other people, whereas they are radically different. Or perhaps it would be better to say that they have *become* different.

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* *Monsieur Henri Massis, the well-known French historian and publicist, was one of the first to note the signs of the break-up of the Christian civilization of Europe following the first world war. His most famous book, "The Defence of the West," has been translated into most European languages. The essay of which this article forms a part was written in 1948 before the recent German Elections.*

The traits which are peculiar to them have been voluntarily grafted, deliberately cultivated and fortified by a school of thought which has long been dominant in the German Reich. These traits, systematized in the philosophy of Hegel, have been carried through several generations to the point of canonization until they have become the religion of German humanity. Germanism is a religious doctrine, the predestination of German man, and the human spirit instinctively recognizes in it a natural dissident, an intractable schism, something which is deliberately and voluntarily *unassimilable* by the rest of mankind.

THESE are not hypothetical views but deductions from nature and from history. They should always be in the forefront of our minds if we wish to understand anything at all about Germany. Any policy which neglects these governing factors runs the risk of committing irretrievable errors. It could have been foretold in 1939, without waiting on the issue of the war, that the fall of Hitler would not in any way affect this expansive force which works organically through the German body politic, seeking to reshape its form.

As we wrote in *La Guerre de Trente Ans*: another German revolution following a new historical alignment which would leave Germany unified would only be a passing manifestation of that need for change which seems suddenly to disturb the German people whenever their existence is at stake.

"If we ever see the day when Germany is not in the grip of authority, or given over to the unbridled power of the man she has elected to make her idol, it will only be because she is awaiting a favourable opportunity to set up another despotism. It is not Hitler who has made the new Germany, it is Germany who made Hitler."

The problem was never Hitler but the predisposition of the German people towards Hitlers. "Hitler was waiting for us on the road" said Reinhold Schneider. Hitlers come and go but the German state and its people remain. The historic service of National-Socialism has been to lay bare the real character of the German people, the reasons which force Germany on to her terrible destiny. The causes which made Nazism inevitable, and which deliberately fostered its advance are perpetually operative and the danger, the ever present danger, only varies in appearance.

FROM the outset the Germany of 1948, irresistably recalled the Germany of 1919-1921. Materially the country is miserably impoverished, spiritually she is distraught and confused and once more, as Eckhard Petrich has said, she is lending herself to the most perilous of enterprises, that of remaking the spirit of man. The Germany of to-day, bowed down by the weight of her own disaster but dreaming of pulling down the rest of the world in her fall, seeking an apocalypse and prophesying the bankruptcy of a world which she has failed to master, is a Germany that we have known before. "The apocalyptic sentiment which is a feature of all the great turning points of history dominates German thought to-day" wrote Ernst Robert Curtius in 1922, and two years later Thomas Mann, whose opposition to Nazism still induces some people to regard him as a friend of France, wrote: "France also in her turn will come to dream of the apocalypse. *Her apparent security is revealed as more and more illusory and we Germans believe we have grounds to hope that the turmoil she experiences will enable us to breathe more freely.* In 1918, the German people was broken in its inmost being. We were as helpless as a new born child." He went on to say: "The shock which France suffered after the defeat of 1870-71 was only child's play compared with the sufferings of Germany during the years immediately before and after 1918. The German people underwent a physical and psychological collapse such as has never previously been witnessed in history. There is no precedent for a great and civilized people, conscious of having rendered enormous and unique services to humanity, finding itself one

day in a status of total rejection and of '*inimicus humanae naturae*', stigmatized, proscribed, abandoned and mortally wounded by the entire society of civilized peoples . . . What followed was unparalleled ruin, a complete and unconditional surrender, the capitulation of a moral fortress long and bitterly defended but in which there remained at last not the very least energy to resist. The demoralization was limitless, it was born of the mortal anxiety of a people who had come to despair of themselves, their history and their gifts, all of which seemed refuted and reduced to absurdity by that which had come to pass. For all these had been staked in the war which, for that reason, they had been told that they *must* win, and which in fact, *with such ideological advantages, they should not have lost.*"*

CERTAINLY the present generation of Germans must feel that with such an ideological advantage as National-Socialism the last war should not have been lost. After the surrender of 1945, everything, absolutely everything, must have seemed annihilated. As Thomas Mann had said to their fathers, so had Dr. Goebbels to them: "History will have no meaning if we lose the war." All that history proves to them is "the incomprehensible injustice of a fate which stubbornly refuses success where it is merited". The nihilism of the younger generation to-day sees in this destruction the only validity in a destiny marked everywhere with the sign of death. Yet the same nihilism was the climate in which the seeds of National-Socialism grew and flourished. The rebirth of Nazism in one form or another is the abiding temptation of the Germans in defeat. "Hitler is in us," said Max Picard and this is the truest explanation of the mood of the German people to-day.

Whatever may be the threat or contagion of this virus of nihilism to Germany's neighbours, we must never forget that to the German people themselves it is a magic elixir from which they silently draw strength and renewal. In the midst of this decomposition of the soul (*seelische Verwüstungen*) they remain faithful to the fundamentals of Germanism, that religion of violence and pride. The German must possess all or destroy all, he must be a force of conquest or of annihilation, when he wishes to build he can only pull down. Through nihilism he is urged to realize that "supreme power" which his immature and barbaric spirit persists in confounding with greatness and which he prides himself upon constantly trying to achieve. "To be feared by the world as its greatest menace is the German's pride" boasts Junger, and in a state of nihilism the German spirit finds the element which excites its will to power.

Fichte was essentially a nihilist, it was a pride in suffering which inspired his famous *Address to the German People*. Nihilism is the root of the Bismarckian ethic, which has been described as the mortal disease of Germany. Bismarck deliberately sought the destruction of morale; he was the apostle of nihilism and cynicism, the "tamer of mankind", as Keyserling described the Nazi hero.

NIETZSCHE, so venerated by the Nazis, was the essential nihilist, "the prophet of a darkness and a confusion such as the world has never seen", the man who said of himself and his mission, "I am a cataclysm".

Hitler, although he boasted that National-Socialism had "conquered that nihilistic force which has ravaged Germany for five hundred years" was yet himself a nihilist. "Now we shall all go down to perdition together" he said prophetically as he reopened the gates of war. These words came from an instinctive consciousness of non-being to the rest of mankind, hostile even to itself. It was not a trait peculiar to Hitler, it is a constant of German psychology, a desire to draw others down to shipwreck because the German can only endure "a world in which Germany

* Thomas Mann. "*L'Esprit de l'Allemagne entre la mystique slave et la latinite*" in *l'Europe Nouvelle*, 14th March, 1925.

occupies the topmost rung". Robert Harcourt recalls that the Germans used to say to him in the course of the earlier war, "If the face of Germany darkens, yours will be overshadowed too". In the depths of their ruin to-day, this is the picture from which they take heart. "The most unforgettable impression of those of us who lived through the war," says a German witness, "is that of a monstrous upheaval *which engulfs the victors and the vanquished alike.*" This is the prophesy of Goebbels fulfilled. "The coalition will not and cannot last. Sooner or later the powers which are allied to-day will be at each other's throats. There can only be one master; they will fight each other to the death for the remnants of what we leave behind."

THIS colossal *Dammerüng*, this vision of disaster which sees the whole of humanity in the void, assuages the vanity of the conquered people who are still secretly proud of the gigantic coup attempted and so nearly brought off. Soon the whisper goes round that as one world collapses another is being shaped. There is no condition more congenial to the German than this fertile chaos through which he hopes to realize his destiny. Fichte, in one of his Discourses, has thus defined this Germanic trait: "It is the mark of an inferior race to accept the idea of a fixed and immutable form. Whoever believes that a principle is constant and unchangeable is dead himself." The German has no intention of submitting to a lingering death. If he seems deliberately to turn away from his traditions, it is because he has not got any, or rather because they are so confused and contradictory that he cannot find in his past any solid ground on which to rest. To a German, history is neither an experience nor a memory, but the expectation of a future, a state of becoming. The past in fact disturbs him, because it reminds him of mortality. The future, on the contrary, reassures him, whatever it may be, because its indeterminate character is to him synonymous with infinitely vital possibilities.

Otto Flake, a German, writing in 1920, about the defeat of 1918, and comparing it with that of France in 1871, wrote these words which may be profitably re-read to-day:

"The French spirit may draw from the admirable unity of French history an experience so intense that it need hardly look further, it has only to look back to its traditions. But we Germans cannot find anything to lean on in our past. This may perhaps be an advantage," he continued, "for us there can be no turning back, we must go forward into the unknown."

So the German seeks to establish his superiority even through this deficiency, this fundamental lack. "Through her total defeat Germany possesses the incredible advantage of being able to realize a total reformation" we read in one of the Young German reviews. In much the same terms, Thomas Mann was to declare on the morrow of another war, "No people has been so profoundly plunged into confusion as our people and no other has so deep an inner need of it." *Das alles neue werde*, everything must be renewed, that is the constant burden of those innumerable theories which the Germans have been pouring out for thirty years in order to disguise their own spiritual bankruptcy. A chance to renew the soul of man completely, to put a new meaning into the concept of humanity, to build up an entirely new scheme of things, this is what the catastrophe of 1918 meant to the German. What it all amounted to in the end was, as we know, the National-Socialist dictatorship. To-day, as yesterday, Germany banks on an upheaval as the result of the European crisis, and the rupture of her national existence twice in thirty years has given her a pathetically sure sentience of its approach. Nothing more revealing and exact has ever been written than these words of Ernst Robert Curtius in 1920: "The conquerors," said this profound German critic, "have re-established their threatened national existences on the old bases. They consider everything from the standpoint of utility and stability,

consolidation and continuity. They seek for guarantees and assurances. But we Germans seek our anchorage in change. We are immediately interested in those theoretical systems which involve *the maximum of possible changes in the state of the world.* The French feel the need for the maximum of permanence. For us, the idea of a European upheaval has not a mere theoretical interest but a positive and vital value."

TRULY for the German race, migratory and formless, the presentiment of European crisis has a heartening effect, and for twenty years they have been engaged in augmenting it. There is certainly to-day no lack of Germans who hope that the antagonisms between the victors will result in an explosion even more terrible than the last and that somehow this explosion will give the German state a chance of political reintegration. Their favourite occupation is a calculation of the chances which would be offered to them in the event of a new world conflagration. A certain type of German is perpetually tempted towards grandiose criminality; he never regrets the crimes he has committed but only those which he lost the opportunity to commit.

Although it is true that this sort of apocalyptic despair only throws open a road without a destination, a new march towards the void, it must never be forgotten that the politics of catastrophe accord perfectly with the German philosophy of life, with their conception of the universe, their *Romantik des Unterganges* which made Clemenceau say: "What distinguishes the Germans from other people is that most of us want to live but they have a taste for dying." Chaos, flux, the illimitable, the nameless and the formless, these are the secret desires of the German soul, the conditions in which it thrives, which sustain its vitality, its appetites and its hopes.

"In saving our Fatherland from chaos, we close the gates on the future and open up the way of resignation," wrote Ernst von Salomon, a statement which throws a clear light upon German mentality. The facility with which they adopt new ways of life and respond to contradictory influences gives rise to those historic upheavals which are a constant menace to the older and more homogeneous nations whose culture is venerated and transmitted as a valuable experience which cannot be ruptured without serious loss. German history, however, is a hotchpotch from which something can always be selected to suit the occasion and it is this peculiarity which has made Germany "the dynamite to European continuity".

AT this point we may ask how the German constants are showing themselves since the defeat of 1945, and where do they find their rallying point. Too many people are ready to believe that the German peril is exorcised for ever, that the country is too irretrievably enfeebled to become dangerous again. The still smoking ruins reassure them and from the German people, reduced to complete powerlessness, they think they have nothing to fear. They are wrong. The latent power of the Germans remains enormous, for it has been truly said that their greatest asset is the strength that they draw from suffering.

No one can dispute that during these last three years the Germans have touched rock bottom in misery and distress. They can be seen passing through their skeleton cities among their gutted houses, in their countryside reduced to rubble, almost visibly in dissolution, as though they had never had a place in history. It should be remembered, however, that a people in a state of dissolution is not likely to be tranquil. As they decompose, German ideas and conditions have both time and opportunity to form in Europe, and even in Germany itself, a highly explosive compound. These towns so utterly destroyed that they can never be raised again, these ruins which stand like a signature of suffering and a permanent incitement to hatred, are not without social and political consequences. Monsieur Robert Harcourt,

whose powerful and lucid study of present-day Germany has already been quoted, says: "What has been destroyed at the same time is the whole conception of bourgeois private life, the conditions necessary to an individual and civilized existence, and so the country has become ideal ground for the development of a gregarious proletariat and for that unified collectivism which was the National Socialist objective."

HITLER'S dream of *Vermessung* has been realized through war and destruction, but it is Communism which will profit by it. Communism has certain definite affinities with National-Socialism as we know, and Communism will benefit from the state of political stress which the refugees from the East have created in Western Germany. It might at first be thought that the forcible expulsion by the Russians of ten million Germans from East Prussia and Silesia would form a core of violent hatred for the Communists in the Western zones, but what they really form is a matrix of despair. The spirit of revolt gathers round these wretched Germans, forcibly torn from the land of their birth and from the fields which their fathers had tilled, these miserable creatures driven barefoot along the roads with a few possessions bundled on their backs. It cannot be doubted that their presence in Western Germany will constitute a dominant political factor in the coming years. A German priest, Paul Simon, wrote in the review *Hochland* in 1947: "It is not the political parties which will determine opinion but the refugees from the east, who will dominate the political parties and form a rallying point for the young and the embittered." Robert Harcourt, who quotes this testimony, comments as follows: "These uprooted people will become recalcitrant. Politically they will gravitate towards the parties of violence and they will draw their neighbours with them. The growing proletarianization, fostered by 'the great eastern iniquity', is in fact singularly favourable to that mixture of nationalism and communism which distinguishes the German state of mind after the disaster."

Once again the chaos which the Allies have left during the three years of occupation will provide the Germans with the climate in which their national consciousness will re-awaken, with a hatred which they will extend to all the occupying powers but particularly to the Western democracies. These they accuse of cowardice in face of Soviet Russia, who at least knows what she wants, where she is going and why. Their hatred will extend also to the entire world, which allowed the German people, ruined and defeated, it is true, but still able and industrious, to sink into complete sterility. We repeat that it is in the anticipation of disaster, in the hope of a conflict between the Allies, that the Germans see their future. "These people have only one hope left," said a Frenchman recently returned from the Soviet zone, "a new cataclysm which will certainly engulf them with the others but from which they alone can see a glimpse of salvation."

GERMANY to-day offers the most favourable conditions for the growth of those revolutionary and nationalist aspirations which would not be slow to coalesce in support of the cause of *either one or the other*, if a favourable moment presented itself, if they saw a chance of grasping a new hope of power. Ninety-five per cent of Germans believe that a third world war would be a war of liberation for them; at the lowest estimate they regard it as their only chance to escape complete enslavement. This is how that reservoir of sentiment on which German nationalism draws is admittedly working to-day, so that the celebrated theologian Karl Barth can talk of "a new and rising wave of nationalism" which, once again, comes from the east. From its beginnings yesterday as a reaction against the victors and fostered by their discord, the recovery of German nationalism is here and now a fact. In the expectation of a new war, at once tempted and tempting, a factor of

disunion between the Allies whom she weighs up and hopes to manipulate to her profit, Germany is quite indifferent to the stream of contradictory decisions taken concerning her, just as she regards the frontiers which have been drawn up as purely provisional, both in the east and in the west. However difficult her present condition as an occupied country, however acute her sufferings, she regards her political position as by no means unfavourable, indeed, she could hardly have hoped that it would right itself so quickly. It is not indeed remarkable if, between the apprehensions and the solicitations of her conquerors outbidding each other among her ruins, she should once again see herself as the chief pawn on the European chess-board. Once more, her weight will make itself felt, once more she will count and others will count on her. She is in the position to choose between two rival blocs, she will enjoy an ideal situation for political bargaining, she may even be to-morrow the arbiter in that great reckoning between east and west which looms nearer and nearer on the horizon.

HOW does Germany come to be in this position, only three years after her total defeat? Because from the outset the Allies refused to consider the real problem as political but preferred to regard it as moral. German "guilt" was the Allied platform and thus a denazified Germany must needs be a better Germany, and the political purge was seen as a moral purification which must bring about internal regeneration. This is precisely what it could not and did not do, and the fact is becoming daily more apparent. Instead of awakening in the Germans a sense of culpability, responsibility or shame, all that denazification has aroused is indifference, scepticism or actual resentment and neither morality nor justice has gained anything whatever by it.

"The spectacle of denazification" wrote Robert Harcourt in an article in *La Revue* (15th January and 1st February, 1948) "has merely convinced the Germans that the Allies have nothing to learn from the totalitarian régimes and that the internment camp is no advance on the concentration camp."

The German point of view is that nothing can be expected from a country whose most responsible citizens are either interned or starving on the streets. We shall reap what we have sown. Denazification, as it has been applied, will simply lead to renazification.

In an enquiry whose results were published by the *Neue Presse* (7th April, 1948) fifty per cent of the persons questioned said that they thought that National Socialism was good in itself but had been badly applied. The significant fact which emerged was that the proportion of Germans who regarded Nazism as intrinsically wrong had fallen from forty-two per cent in 1945, to thirty-seven per cent in 1948. Robert Harcourt states that this hardening of German opinion cannot be overlooked by anyone who travels there with open eyes. Almost every encounter reveals to the non-German witness that "frightening impenitence" of which Karl Barth has spoken.

In any case, and whatever their degree of real culpability, you cannot treat a whole people as being in a state of sin. Even among those who definitely call themselves anti-Nazi and who realize that Germany must be made to pay, there is little feeling of responsibility and even less of moral guilt. They only employ moral and democratic terminology in order to secure an amnesty and to claim the right to do wrong in good faith. Do not let us deceive ourselves, if Germany to-day disclaims the charge of moral guilt it is only to evade the obligation of repayment to-morrow.

THIS state of affairs has been brought about through our failure to recognize that the German problem is political and our attempt to apply an ideological test, denazification, democratization or what you will. We do not seem to understand that all this can only serve to consolidate German unity, that unity which inspired German conduct from 1914 to 1939, and which would not hesitate to become to-morrow, in a new

battle of Leipzig, the spearhead of the attack on the West.

The folly of democratization is a repetition of the mistake of 1919. Twice in a quarter of a century Germany has been offered democracy on the sword point of her conquerors. The very word, to a German, reeks of punishment, of national affliction, of oppression and servitude. It rings in his ears like *Vae Victis*. Democracy is, to the German people, a ransom paid by the defeated and that alone should make us pause to think. Yet they can turn anything to account, however bad it is, if they see a chance of evading just responsibilities, and the ideology of democracy, which lends itself to every sort of equivocation, can be made to serve the purpose of easing the German conscience and expiating its guilt.

For instance the Social Democrats in the Western Zone have said already "the democratic Germans, and particularly the Social Democratic Party, should not be treated as *conquered or guilty*". This claim enables the said Social Democrats to defend the unity of the Reich and to assert that Germany should be maintained as "a national political and economic entity" (their words). The Party Manifesto continues "Only thus can we succeed in restoring in Germany that unity in which our youth will welcome the ideas of peace, democracy and socialism not as a consequence of the collapse of the Third Reich, but as *prime necessities spontaneously sought*".

IN order to preserve her unity, Germany will pretend to accept anything. The unity of the Reich is her obsession, she sees it as her fundamental problem, vital to the existence of the German people. Under the cloak of the federal system the German socialists would revert to the old Marxian dream of a government extending not only over all Germany but over all Europe and the entire world. Their argument was always that a Socialist Germany, by virtue of her history, her culture and her perfected industrialization, was best constituted to be the kernel of a European federation, the natural centre of world revolution. Dreaming still of that vision of hegemony, the word "federation" is for Kurt Schumacher simply a convenient euphemism for the worst realities of centralization and totalitarianism.

If the campaign for democracy has served merely to consolidate German unity in the west it has been even more successful in the east, where Soviet Russia has made the cause of German unity her own. The Russians are the most zealous champions of a unified German state and the German nationalists themselves are obliged to admit that the most practical suggestions for the recovery of their country come from the Communists, and from them alone. The political unity of Germany is to-day backed by Russia and it is through the programme of the S.E.D. (Sozialistische Einheitspartie Deutschlands), inspired by Moscow, that the wind of unifying nationalism is blowing from the east towards the west. While there are only two German blocs, the Germans feel that unity is not far off, even if it is at first necessary to obey the Soviet behest. The Soviets can be gradually assimilated and then dominated. Prussia will take care of that, Prussia the catalyst, the unifier, the virile principle of Germany, the steel thread that binds the uncertain, centrifugal pieces of the German federation, always prone to break away and fall apart, the round stones, as Hegel said, which cannot fit in with each other and will only lie together in a solid accretion. Prussia will integrate Western Germany with the Communist National Germany of the eastern zone as soon as she is ready to accept incorporation in the Soviet political and economic system and the Peoples Democracies of eastern Europe. Prussia as a state may cease to exist, but the Prussian idea will not be destroyed. Once again she will play her historic rôle of the centre of gravity, endowed with an even greater magnetic force. It is from Prussia that, sooner or later, the new Communist National State of Germany will rise.

NOTES ON THE REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON POPULATION

By DOUGLAS JERROLD

IT is greatly to be hoped that Mr. David Low has read this Report with the care it deserves because it provides on almost every page (if the Commissioners are right), the proof of the almost unerring wisdom of his favourite Aunt Sally, Colonel Blimp.

The first outstanding fact of the last two hundred years, we are told, is the immense increase (260 per cent) in the population of Europe and the Americas in the period from 1750 to 1900 as compared with the relatively small increase (less than 90 per cent) in the population of Africa and Asia during the same period.

> "This increase in population provided both a motive for, and a means to, the development of the modern technique of production, trade and communications on which present day European standards of living are based, for it provided both an expanding market and an expanding labour supply. This twofold stimulus helped not only to develop the internal economic life of European countries, but also to build up the great system of international trade, international investment and the development of non-European territories. . . . European countries also provided by overseas emigration the man-power needed for the work of development, and by international investment they provided the necessary equipment. Thus they not only built up their own highly developed industrial system but also created a new overseas world mainly inhabited by people of European descent, with European social and political systems and imbued with European culture. . . .
>
> "In this process Great Britain took a leading part. Her population was growing with special rapidity, multiplying by 3½ times between 1801 (when the first British census was taken) and 1901. The rest of Europe, taken as a whole, was growing much less quickly, and Great Britain's share in the population of the continent rose from 5.7 per cent in 1801 to 9 per cent in 1900. It would be entirely wrong to suppose that this alone was the explanation of the fact that Great Britain also led the world in industrial development, in international trade, in foreign investment, and in emigration to the new overseas countries. What can be said, however, is that if her population had not been growing, and growing rapidly, her leadership could not have endured more than a few years; that the economic development of the world would have been slower, so that the standard of living both in Britain and elsewhere would now be lower than it actually is. . . ."

This is indeed a striking tribute from what is anything but a Tory Commission to the vast benefits conferred on the world by the capitalist system, British leadership and the British imperial system.

The second outstanding fact is the great and continuing decline in the rate of increase of the population of Western Europe in the last fifty years. The Commissioners have no hesitation in concluding that, despite the recent increases in the birth-rate, the rate of reproduction is to-day below replacement requirements, and that this fact is due to the fall in the size of the family as a result of deliberate limitation. Elsewhere in this number Mr. Christopher Hollis discusses the implications of this. We are concerned here with the findings of the Commissioners as to the ultimate causes (social, economic and political) which have led to this limitation. For it is here that Colonel Blimp comes into his own.

The gallant Colonel's general view as to the virtues of nineteenth century capitalism in general and the British version of that system in particular are, as we have seen, endorsed with notable enthusiasm by the Commissioners. When they come to examine the causes of the fall in the rate of reproduction which set in about the beginning of this

century, which, after a careful examination of the arguments on the other side, they are unanimous in deploring, they echo the Colonel in almost every paragraph.

The decline of the family economy, whereby the children added to the family income in youth and were the chief support of the parents in old age, is rightly stressed as of the first importance. And to this consideration the Commissioners add a reflection on the distressing effects on the birth-rate of higher educational standards, and the ever increasing toll of years subtracted from the working life of all classes by the teaching professions.

> "The need for higher standards of education and technical skills in industry, trade and the public services, the rise of professional bodies demanding higher standards of professional training in their members, and the adoption in 1870 of a general system of open competitive examinations for the Civil Service were parts of a process in which material success in life had come to depend increasingly on the sort of education one had had. This process was reflected in the great development of the public school system in the mid 19th century and the later increase of facilities for other types of secondary and higher education and for technical training."

The growth in the belief in the infallibility of the popes of science, and the effect of that belief as a solvent of the traditional morality is rightly stressed as another cause of the limitation of families. Linked with this is "the development of the social conscience" stimulated by the wide range of health and social services.

Finally we come to the rising status of women culminating in the realization that woman's place, wherever it was, is to-day not in the home.

> "In the old family handicrafts and rural economy, many women enjoyed the more varied life and the more independent status of a partner in the income earning activities of home industry. The rise of a factory system, therefore, in this respect tended to narrow the interests of women, and the movement for equality of the sexes was in part a revolt against the conditions that tended to restrict women to the rôle of producer of children and household drudge. It reflected, of course, other influences, among them the development of education, rising standards of living, and a more refined standard of manners and conduct. This movement, by opening up carreers for women, often brought a money-earning career into conflict with motherhood. But its other important effect, in relation to family size, was to weaken the traditional dominance of the husband, to raise the woman's status in marriage, with interests outside the home as well as inside, and to emphasize the wife's rôle as a companion to her husband as well as a producer of children. Unrestricted child-bearing, which involved hardship and danger to women, became increasingly incompatible with the rising status of women and the development of a more considerate attitude of husbands to wives."

Before discussing the significance of the findings it is useful to quote two asides by the Commissioners themselves. The first concerns education. The shrinkage in the child population

> "is of material advantage to those in charge of education and other services for children; it makes possible an improvement in standards which would otherwise have been impossible. Educational progress is seriously impeded by a rapidly growing child population, which absorbs all the available resources in the mere extension of existing facilities to cover the larger school population. Conversely, the fall in numbers in the last 30 years has given an opportunity to improve the quality of education by e.g. raising the school leaving age, reducing the size of classes, replacing old schools and out-of-date equipment."

The second aside concerns industrial expansion. The decrease in the number of new entrants into industry, the Commissioners comment,

> "must have had an effect on the flexibility of the economic system. When one industry is expanding and another declining, as is always happening in a progressive community like ours, the easiest method by which the labour force of the expanding industry can grow is by absorbing an abnormally large share of the new recruits. This involves much less dislocation, hardship and inefficiency than would be caused by the wholesale transfer to the growing industry of workers already established in some other less prosperous industry. Other things being equal therefore, the reduction in the rate of intake must be expected to make it more difficult for expanding industries to grow. In this way it tends to reduce the mobility of the productive system."

What have these grave arguments to do with the inanities of our friend Colonel Blimp? Simply this. Blimp's propaganda value to the Socialist party lay in the regularity with which in every crisis he came forward with the unpopular remedy or with a denunciation of some widely popular reform. If our economy was in trouble, Blimp wished to reduce the social services; but whatever the state of our economy, Blimp wanted bigger armaments and income tax reductions. Above all, Blimp was incurably insistent and tiresomely repetitive on the merits of the good old days of capitalism and free enterprise when Britain led the world. The labour thesis, *per contra*, has been for two generations now that the good old days were bad days which bred poverty not wealth, that we were moving forward into days of increasing prosperity and security, and that such signs of stress and maladjustment as our economy exhibited were due to evil legacies from the old, not to defects in the new dispensation.

This Report on Population, acclaimed by the Press of both parties as one of the most important and authoritative state papers of recent times, gives the lie direct to the labour thesis both as to the past and the present, and asks us to accept as scientifically established the thesis that there is an essential incompatability between the conditions prevailing in the welfare state *as we know it to-day* and the conditions which must prevail if as a people we are to continue and multiply and not to die slowly but surely of depopulation and a stagnant productive system.

The starkness of this conclusion is well concealed from the casual reader of the Report. Firstly, the Commissioners show a very considerable optimism as to the possibility of error in any estimate of future population. Secondly, they hold out expectations of a further great fall in infantile and child mortality and of a further lengthening of the expectation of life for adults (expectations which, if fulfilled, mean that there will be no serious fall in total population for a very long time), and, finally, they are confident that further and more intelligently directed financial inducements to parenthood will in fact produce that six per cent increase in the average size of the family which will, if their complicated statistical assumptions (all of them admittedly matters of inference) are in fact correct, make the difference between the life and the death of our society.

If only because their own calculations are provisional (in any case the future is uncertain), it would be foolhardy to affirm catigorically that the Commissioners are wrong in taking, in face of the alarming facts which they disclose, only so mildly pessimistic a view. It is, however, necessary to realize that the present deficiency in the rate of reproduction is (a) indubitable and (b) very serious indeed. The key Tables are XL and XLI,* and it should be noted that all the figures in both tables assume a decline in mortality rates.

(The series of future figures all assume marriage rates constant at the "intermediate" level of 1942-47, and no net migration; they differ in respect of the size of family assumed.)

Table XL

Population ages between 15 and 14, Great Britain, 1851-1947 and as projected 1947-2047.

1851.... 8.4 millions; 1911....17.0 millions; 1939....18.8 millions; 1947....18.0 millions

	Series (a) Projected assuming family size constant at same level as among couples married 1927-38.	Series (b) Projected assuming family size constant at level 6 per cent higher than among couples married 1927-38.	Series (c) Projected assuming family size falling to 80 per cent of that of couples married 1927-38.
1962	16.8	16.8	16.8
1977	17.1	17.6	16.7
2007	16.0	17.5	12.5
2047	14.7	17.5	8.7

* Cmd. 7695 of 1949, pp. 86 and 87.

Table XLI

Population aged under 15, Great Britain 1851-1947, and as projected, 1947-2047.

1851.... 7.4 millions; 1911....12.6 millions; 1939....10.0 millions; 1947....10.3 millions

	Series (a) Projected assuming family size constant at same level as among couples married 1927-38.	Series (b) Projected assuming family size constant at level 6 per cent higher than among couples married 1927-38.	Series (c) Projected assuming family size falling to 80 per cent of that of couples married 1927-38.
1952	11.0	11.1	11.0
1962	10.4	10.9	10.0
1977	9.8	10.5	8.1
2007	9.3	10.6	6.5
2047	8.7	10.7	4.4

These figures make it certain that there will be a rapidly decreasing number of young adults. In addition to marrying and bringing up their children these unfortunate people will have to support a vastly increased population of ages over sixty-five. Of these there were only one million in 1851 and only five million to-day. By 1977 there will be over eight millions. The bearing of this on the finances of the welfare state is crystal clear.

This brings us to the real weakness of the Report, the assumption that further expenditure, by way of income tax reliefs, higher children's allowances and domestic assistance for mothers of young children, can be incurred and financed in some way which will produce a great *net* gain of income to all families. They envisage a constant marriage rate, and that rate has always been high (the proportion married at ages fifty to fifty-four has never yet fallen below eighty-six per cent). How can any substantial increase in the income of families with children under sixteen (and some of the concessions proposed will apply to children even older) be provided except, by and large, at the expense of the same families? The burden of taxation must in any case increase with the great increase in the relative numbers of the pensioned, the aged and the infirm. Further, the more successful the policy is the greater the cost of education and health services, the fewer the number of bachelors and childless couples on whom any differential rates of taxation could fall.

Is it at all possible to avoid the conclusion that, on the purely material assumptions to which the Commissioners limit themselves, a rising standard of material comfort is, in fact, incompatible with even a stationary population? The answer is clear. The conclusion is inescapable.

The outlook would be dark but for the one possibility which the Commissioners do not consider, i.e., that the reproduction rate in all intellectually adult societies may, in fact, be conditioned by moral not by material considerations. The most historically powerful of these considerations is probably the social optimism born of an expanding economy. Are children being born into a world which is going forward or going backward or remaining at best stationary—or into a world of boundless opportunity? And these non-material considerations lead us inevitably and directly to the question of religion. Will a society which, by and large, has lost its faith in any future life ever desire to make the sacrifices which even relatively small families entail? And, in any case, can such a society feel any *moral* obligation to do so? It is here, according to some, that we reach the final incompatibility between our society as it is to-day and the society which alone can endure because it has the seeds of life within it. Mr. Christopher Hollis in the article which follows indicates the only possible escape from the dilemma.

HOW MANY CHILDREN?

By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS*

THE Report of the Royal Commission on Population tells us some things that we did not know before and also gives us the exact facts and figures of other things of which we had been generally aware. It is invaluable to have such facts by us in handy compass and for this service they deserve our deep gratitude. They also are not ashamed to confess on occasion to a wise and healthy ignorance. In demography, even more than in other sciences, such confession is not infrequently the highest wisdom. The variations of birth-rates are and remain one of the deepest mysteries. Even the discovery of the facts of what has happened is by no means as easy as appears at first sight. The cautious scholar can advance his guesses for the causes of rise or fall, but he is wise if he continually reminds himself that they are but guesses—only matters of greater or less probability. Indeed, we should remember more often than we do that whatever biology and observation may have told us about how life comes into being, the ultimate Why remains to-day as great a mystery as it was to our first ancestors. We have certainly much to learn about the laws of demography. Nor, indeed, do we even know whether that is the correct way to state the problem. There is no knowing at all whether it is merely that we have not yet discovered the unalterable laws by which these things are regulated or whether the truth is not rather that they are not regulated by such laws at all but that Providence acts here by direct intervention and arranges the rise and fall of empires by increasing and decreasing the philoprogenitiveness of their members. The second is every bit as likely as the first.

The Commission had of course limited and limiting terms of reference, and this in various places in the report they recognize. It was their duty "to examine the facts relating to the present population trends in Great Britain". But this limitation does give an oddly parochial tone to many of their pages. "What yer gwine to doo when de world's on fire?" was the very practical question which I once heard asked at a negro service in Savannah, and some of the more detailed debates about the precise advantages of this or that number or distribution of population do at times seem almost comic before the background of world catastrophe which a failure to solve demographic problems at large must threaten. There is emphatically a danger of fiddling while Rome is burning.

It is idle to debate this subject unless we first understand that the historical probabilities are all in favour of catastrophe. The general law of history is that when a society attains a certain level of material comfort, its birth-rate, and therefore in time its population, fall. After a while the more fecund barbarians break in, destroy the ancient civilization, to become in their turn decadent and then sterile, in their turn to be overthrown by yet further barbarians. In this way fell the Roman Empire before the barbarians from beyond the Rhine. In this way in our time fell France, which in Louis XIV's day had been able to dominate Europe because, among other things, she was the most populous country in Europe. She fell before Germany because she had first allowed herself to be overtaken in population by Germany. It is necessary only to cite the most familiar examples. Professor

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Flinders Petrie can supply the list of twenty-two more fallen civilizations.

And here to-day are we in Great Britain—inhabitants indeed of an island that is itself overpopulated but, with a vital rate that is below replacement, threatened with a decline of population—the head of an Empire that is in most parts of it ludicrously underpopulated and placed in a world whose most aggressive nations are rapidly increasing in numbers. People debate in the abstract whether high birth-rates or low birth-rates are good. They talk of an optimum population *in vacuo*. The debate is a little ridiculous. Wars are caused not by high birth-rates as such nor by low birth-rates as such but by nationally differential birth-rates—by the fact that people in different parts of the world behave differently about their birth-rates, thus causing a redistribution of the world's population—a redistribution that as a rule in history it has only been possible to effect by force.

Are there then any reasons why the British Empire should not go the way of the empires of the past? Is there anything in the conditions of the modern world which will save us from the catastrophe that befell our predecessors? or is there anything that we we can do about it to save us from that castastrophe?

In the past God has certainly been on the side of the big battalions. It has by no means been a general law that the greatest contributions to civilization have come from the largest states. Athens and Florence in a generation have given us more than great empires over the centuries. Indeed, membership of too large a unit seems to have a sterilizing rather than stimulating effect on the creative artist. But we speak of survival. The trouble about the survival of the fittest is that those whose survival is most desirable are by no means necessarily the same as those who are physically most fitted to survive. Those whom the gods love generally die young. To live well it may have been necessary to belong to a small unit. To live at all it is necessary to belong to a large one. In spite of certain freak exceptions such as the conquests of Cortes and Pizarro in Central and South America or of Clive in India, it remains a general truth, as one would have expected, that in the past the many have generally conquered the few.

There are some who say that that is all changed to-day. Modern weapons give their advantages not to mere numbers but to those who possess them, however few they may be.

> "Whatever happens, we have got
> The maxim gun and they have not,"

and soon, we are told, one scientist, pressing a button will be able to conquer the world. As to such arguments, it is of course true enough that mere numbers by themselves are valueless. An unarmed and undisciplined horde can be shot down, it is true, by a few trained, armed troops, but it is also true that only the highly industrialized Power can build up its adequately equipped army and that you cannot have high industrialization without a large market and a large population. Numbers alone do not ensure power, but it is impossible to have power without numbers. Up to the present, far from numbers being irrelevant, never was there a time when they were more relevant than to-day. The last war showed how greatly the power of the small nation in relation to the great had declined since the war of 1914, and the disintegration which the British Empire has suffered since 1945, has been eloquent of the world's opinion that it cannot hope for effective leadership from an island of fifty millions in a world which contains Great Powers in the hundred millions. What buttons the scientists may invent in the future is as it may be. "For the present", as the Commission truly tells us, "number must be regarded as an important military factor".

If that be so, the danger clearly is that we, together with the other nations of Western Europe, may be overwhelmed by the growing numbers of Russia in the East. Russia will doubtless in the course of time have her own

demographic crisis, but, as we have learnt, a falling birth-rate after a period of growth only reflects itself in a falling population after a considerable interval, because for some time, though there are fewer children per woman, there are with each generation more women to have the children. Therefore, whatever may happen to the birth-rates of Russia and Southern Europe, they are certain to have steadily increasing populations for some time to come. By the same reasoning India is also certain to have an increasing population—unless of course the numbers should be decreased by some overwhelming calamity of plague or famine. In the nineteenth century the European population of the world was increasing fast and the Asiatic and African populations, not yet feeling the benefits of modern medicine and its reduced death-rate, were not yet increasing. During that century the European proportion of the world's population increased from twenty-five per cent to thirty-four per cent and that increase was one of the factors that made possible the establishment of a European hegemony of the world. The East has now to an extent learnt the lessons of our medicine. The prospect is of a rapidly increasing Oriental and African population. A static European population can hardly hope to maintain itself before it. We might, if the cards of diplomacy are ill-played, be actually defeated in war. If the balance of power was against us, we could only escape war by accepting the realities of power without war—or alternatively we could only escape surrender to Russia or the Orient by surrendering to the United States.

It is this pressure upon us from outside that dictates more than anything else the demographic policy which we must pursue. We are in no position to ask what in the abstract is the optimum population which will give us the highest possible standard of living. We must ask rather what is the population that we must have and then see how we can give as high a standard as possible to that population. It is to little purpose merely to say, as the Commission says, "Women should have the maximum freedom in the ordering of their lives". What is the maximum? It is no good to say "We approve of feminism. Feminism has come to stay", and then see what birth-rate we can achieve along with feminism. If we cannot achieve a sufficient birth-rate with feminism, then feminism is a luxury which we cannot afford.

What is the policy that is likely to save us?

The Commission tells first that our present birth-rate is somewhat below reproduction. It is not, it is true, as far below as many alarmists have led us to believe. The situation is by no means irretrievable. The figures upon which it bases this calculation, which is a good deal more optimistic than that of Professor Kuczynski and other experts, are indeed exceedingly obscure and it is by no means clear why they think that 2.2 is the present average number of children per family. We must await the publication of their full statistics before passing judgment on their accuracy. But for the moment to the argument that they deduce from them. The birth-rate is definitely below reproduction, and, while paying only a passing attention to the foreign menace, while admitting a balance of economic arguments for larger or smaller populations, the Commission is on grounds of morale quite firmly opposed to any acceptance of a falling population. "There is much to be said for the view, they report, that a failure of a society to reproduce itself indicates something wrong in its attitude to life which is likely to involve other forms of decadence. The cult of childlessness and the vogue of the one child family were symptoms of something profoundly unsatisfactory in the Zeitgeist of the inter-war period, which it may not be fanciful to connect with the sophistications and complacencies which contributed to the catastrophe of the second world war".

This is undoubtedly true, and in a world whose pressure of population is as is the pressure of the modern world the question whether it would be desirable to have a less full island is an academic question. If we do not fill the island ourselves it will be filled by

other people in our despite. On the other hand, we do not want more people, argue the Commission; we want a stable population. And within the large question of the total birth-rate lies a smaller and yet more intractable question. Ability is by and large inherited and by and large it is the intelligent who have the few children and the unintelligent who have the many. Therefore there is reason to fear that the level of intelligence of the population is steadily falling.

"On the average" they write "the more intelligent have smaller families than the less intelligent, and since a large part of intelligence is inherited there is in process with each generation a progressive lowering of the average level of innate intelligence of the nation. Evidence on this subject was submitted to us by Professor Godfrey Thomson, and subsequently by Professor R. A. Fisher, Dr. E. O. Lewis, Dr. Fraser Roberts, Professor Sir Cyril Burt and Professor J. B. S. Haldane. . . . The evidence records attempts that have been made to calculate the loss of average intelligence that might be expected in successive generations from this cause. These calculations differ considerably, but they all point to a rather serious drop in average intelligence with a more than corresponding increase in mental deficiency and decrease of high intelligence (say of scholarship standard). . . . We are not in a position to evaluate the expert evidence we have received to the effect that there is inherent in the differential birth-rate a tendency towards lowering the average level of intelligence in the nation. The evidence, tentative and inconclusive though it is but backed by an impressive weight of expert authority, raises very serious issues."

The Commission truly show how very many of the arrangements of modern society are a handicap to the parents of large families, particularly among the middle classes, how insufficient are the compensations provided by subsidies and other social devices, how different is our civilization from the Oriental civilization when it could be said to the parent without qualification "Happy is he that hath his quiver full of them" because children could be made from the earliest years to work for their parents. A high school-leaving age, desirable as it may be in itself, is a heavy burden on parents. Therefore it is the purpose of the Commission to reverse some of the handicaps of parenthood by granting larger family allowances, larger children's income tax allowances and in other ways. Whether the problem is as completely an economic problem as the Commission seems to think may be doubted. The experience of France with its more generous assistance to parents which has had little effect on the birth-rate seems to show that it is not, and that religion and a philosophy which teaches that life was worth living are even more important than economic remedies.

But, however that may be, the important point is the implication in the Commission's argument which is never explicitly drawn. It is surely this. If we want a stable population and only a moderate increase in the total birth-rate, if we want a large increase in the birth-rate of the educated and increased numbers among them, it is clear that we want a smaller birth-rate among the poor. We want the poor to have fewer children—the more so since the Commission express the hope, which all must share, that the death-rate among the poor will be greatly reduced—at least in so far as to bring it down to that of the better-to-do.

How are we going to persuade the poor to have fewer children? By more generous instruction in birth control, say the Commission. Though the use of contraceptives and still more of *coitus interruptus* are, they think, extremely common in all classes, yet there are still a number of "unwanted" babies. So they ask for the abolition of the present restrictions on birth-control instruction by medical authorities. "The giving of advice on contraception to married persons who want it should be accepted as a duty of the National Health Service," they say.

There is something just a little prim and

mid-Victorian about this restriction of the advice to "married persons". If it is right to do all that may be done to prevent "unwanted" births, is it not on occasion even more important to give instruction to the unmarried than to the married? The trouble with all discussion about contraceptives is that the disputants tend to skate gingerly round the question because of its moral issue and therefore there is often no full and frank consideration of quite other difficulties than the direct moral one. For my part, whatever our opinions as theologians I do not see how, as politicians, we can well do other than recognize the facts that there are, on the one hand, people who have a religious objection to the use of these devices and, on the other hand, there are others to whom it would be a wanton insult to deny the title of good citizens and in many cases of good Christians who can see no such objection. Therefore in a society of religious toleration we have a right on the one hand to demand that the use of such devices should not in any way be forced on those who object to them — that doctors should only recommend them to those who ask for them. But on the other hand, if a patient goes to the doctor and says that he or she intends to use such devices in any event, I can see no harm in the doctor telling him which devices are harmful and which are harmless. It can be no advantage to anyone that a person should unnecessarily ruin his health or a lady should unnecessarily damage her capacity to have children later on. Or, again, if a woman cannot for medical reasons have another child, there can surely be no objection to the doctor frankly telling her that she must either abstain or else allow herself to be sterilized. It is only objectionable if the doctor steps beyond his medical province and uses his position to force upon his patient some advise based on a general ideological theory rather than on the medical facts of the particular case. The Catholic has after all the highest authority for treating facts as they are when he comes across them as a legislator. Does not St. Thomas Aquinas write, "So also in human government those who are in power rightly permit certain evils lest some good be brought to nothing or perhaps even greater evils take their place. As St. Augustine says in the De Ordinatione, "If prostitution be suppressed, licence will rage unchecked".

But the real point at issue here is somewhat different. It is the belief of the Commission that there are still a sufficient number of "unwanted" births among the poor so that, if adequate instruction should prevent all these unwanted births from taking place, then it would be possible so to reduce the birth-rate among the poor that the population in general would be stabilized. They seem wholly to miss the great practical difficulty in their policy. People are only too apt to talk in large generalization about "teaching people birth control" as a remedy for political problems. Mr. Bertrand Russell would teach it to the Russians and the Chinese. Mr. Vogt would make an "effective birth-control policy" the condition of American aid to any foreign government. But the trouble with birth-control propaganda is that it is never impartially accepted by all classes and all peoples all over the world. Of its nature it is much more easily received by the literate than the illiterate, by the townsman than the countryman, by the progressive than the traditionalist, and therefore, though the member of a dying aristocracy may well wish that the "lesser breeds without the law" would practise birth control as vigorously as his own class, the lesser breeds think quite otherwise. Their ambition is not to keep the peace and to keep things exactly as they are. Their ambition is to use their superior virility to extrude the dying aristocracy and to enter into its heritage. The Chinese and the Indians will say "Why should we practise birth control and make things more comfortable for the European just when at last we have an opportunity of destroying his hegemony?"

Even more intractable is the domestic problem. Although they do not trail their coats unduly, the Commissioners do not

conceal their own opinion that the argument in favour of contraceptives is compulsive. If the argument were to be universally accepted, what would be the result? It would mean indeed that birth-control propaganda would make its converts among the uneducated as it has already made them among the educated. "Unwanted" children would remain unborn. The birth-rate among the poor would be reduced. To that extent it would achieve its purpose, but the point which the Commissioners have overlooked is that contraceptives would doubtless be used by the careful and prudent. Their children would remain unborn. But the people whose children they particularly wish to prevent, are precisely the people who either would not use contraceptives at all or would not persist in the use of them. The careless and improvident would use them for a time, as they do to-day, and then find them too much bother and do without them. The subnormal, whose reproduction, it is particularly desired to prevent, would be exactly the people who obviously would not use contraceptives at all. The rate of increase among the subnormal is in any event a problem. In cruder ages it has been kept within manageable dimensions because families have been left to fend for themselves and therefore among the subnormal the very high birth-rate has been to some extent balanced by a very high death-rate. In a "welfare state" the children of the subnormal will be kept alive and they will multiply by geometrical progression.

It is already, as we have quoted from the report, one of our great national problems that by and large the most intelligent parents have the fewest children, and this is true not only between class and class but within each particular class. The consequence of a philosophy of contraception, universally accepted, must necessarily be to reduce the total birth-rate among the poor—it may be very much in the way in which in mere numbers it is desired to reduce it—but also to assure that the people whom we most want to have children have the fewest children and the people whom we least want to have children have the most children.

There are two easily intelligible policies. There is the old fashioned policy which says that it is neither for Governments nor for planners to interfere in this mystery. All people have a God-given right to have children. Who are we to say which life is valuable and which life is valueless? How can we tell of what genius or holiness we are robbing the world if we seek to dictate who shall not be born?

For that policy there is clearly much to be said. But there is also clearly much in the Malthusian answer to it, which is, "That's all very well but with death-rates as low as modern medicine has brought them, if everyone is going to have large families population will soon outrun subsistence, and pestilence and famine will step in to do the work which political planning has been too cowardly to tackle". Therefore, argue the Malthusians and argue the Commissioners, we must, willy-nilly, have a planned population. It is an honest argument, but you must admit the consequence of it which the Commissioners do not frankly admit. It cannot be all done by kindness and birth-control instruction. If you want a planned population, then you must use compulsion on those whose intelligence or character is such that they cannot co-operate with the plan. You must take the small minority whom you judge to be unfit to have children and sterilize them, and if you are not willing, as public opinion and the Commission are not willing, to go to that length, then it is useless to talk about a planned and stabilized population.

Is there a third course? I think that there is.

Though a stabilized population without sterilization means necessarily a population of declining intelligence, there is no reason why an increasing population should be of declining intelligence. Allow, if you will, those who genuinely do not want children to take steps that they do not have them, but it is at least fortunate for the nation that there is a section of its population which has

conscientious objections to contraception. It is not of course only among Roman Catholics that such objections are found, but the Catholic Church is the one coherent body which has made uncompromising its opposition to birth control. The Commission describes very fairly the policy of the Catholic Church on this matter and the results of that policy. The Catholic Church does not, like the Hindoos, preach that all birth is inevitably good whatever the chances of health and survival. It does not advocate "an avalanche of births". It allows the use of the safe period and preaches continence, and the result is, as the Commission says, though without giving precise figures, that Catholic birth-rates in all countries and in all classes move in sympathy with the general birth-rates of the surrounding society but are always somewhat higher. That is exactly what we want. The increase of the Catholic population provides exactly the increase of the normal which is necessary to balance the inevitable increase of the subnormal.

But, of course, this can only be if we are content to have not merely a stable but a slightly increasing population. But what are we to do with an increasing population when our island is already so grossly overcrowded? The answer clearly lies in emigration, which must be on a much larger scale than the Commission envisages. Generous inter-imperial migration is necessary alike for demographic and for political reasons. If Britain is overpopulated, the Dominions are underpopulated. Britain cannot hope to play a leading part in face of the gigantic masses of Russia and the United States, India and China, but the British Empire can still hope to play a leading part.

It is true that the Commission insists that immigrants must be "of good human stock and not prevented by their religion or race from intermarrying with the host population and becoming merged in it". (How unfortunate is this modern habit by which it is thought to be less offensive not say bluntly what you mean.) If by that the Commission means that it would be no happy solution to import a million negroes after the manner of Pombal to keep up the numbers of our population one must agree with them. But, if they mean, as they clearly do, that they do not want too many Roman Catholics either from Ireland or from the Continent whether in this country or in the Dominions, then it must be said first that they do not seem to understand how very different are the proportions between Catholics and Protestants in the Dominions to those in this country, and secondly that it is quite impossible to solve the demographic problem in such a way as to ensure the survival of our island and Empire unless Catholics, both home born and immigrant, are frankly welcomed as full members of society and the Empire frankly seen as a great joint Catholic-Protestant enterprise. As such there is no reason to despair of its future and its greatness. The choice is not between quality and quantity. The truth is rather that we can only have quality if we are prepared to have quantity, and fortunately the great open spaces of the Dominions make this possible.

THE BOER WAR OF 1899-1902

By J. F. C. FULLER*

"It's the soldiers of the Queen, my lads,
Who've been, my lads—who're seen, my lads,
In the fight for England's glory, lads,
When we've had to show them what we mean.
And when we say we've always won,
And when they ask us how it's done,
We'll proudly point to ev'ry one
Of England's soldiers of the Queen!".

WAITING until the grass would be growing on the veldt, on 9th October, 1899, President Kruger presented an ultimatum to the British Agent in Pretoria demanding that all mutual differences should be settled by arbitration, an answer being required within forty-eight hours. Prestige at once stepped in, for acceptance would have carried with it the admittance that the South African Republic and the Empire were equals. Therefore, the upshot was that at five o'clock on the evening of the 11th a state of war between the Empire and the Republic was declared to exist: a war which was to last for over two and a half years.

At the time our Army was a semi-feudal, royal gathering of soldiers who looked upon themselves as the Queen's men and on the Government as their parsimonious paymaster. It was an army governed by occult and archaic regulations. For instance, when a recruit joined the Household Cavalry, Cavalry, R.A. or R.E. the public generously provided him with a hair brush; whereas the Foot Guards and Infantry of the Line were presented with a comb. And though the recruits of the above favoured Corps were issued with two pairs of cotton pants, the Queen of the battlefield —the Infantry—got none!

The trooper was still armed with the tools of tilt and tourney, and when fully equipped for war became a slow-moving pantechnicon; for he carried on his charger no less than thirty-five articles, from hoof-picker to woollen cap. The gunner belonged to a kind of masonic fraternity, closely protected by pass-words and signs, quite unintelligible to the other arms. Only the foot soldier was in any sense modern; for he was armed with a .303 Lee-Metford rifle, an excellent weapon, which he was taught to use like a slightly improved Brown Bess. Also every battalion had two Maxim guns, each mounted on what closely resembled a milk-cart chassis drawn by a mule, and apparently out of consideration for the animal, it was laid down in the regulations that the gun was "to be fired only with the shafts on the ground".

Routine dominated the entire life of the soldier. He drilled four hours a day for five days a week, and after a year of this soul-destroying work, having been moulded into a fighting man, Guards became his main outlook on life. Guards were real soldiering, the rest was but a concession to the public. An old Adjutant once said: "There is only one thing which makes troops more 'unsoldier-like' than musketry and manœuvres, and that is active service," which from a Guard's point of view is correct. Nevertheless, these unsoldier-like annoyances had to be got through.

Because the men paid for their uniforms, all field training was looked upon as a punishment, and though a few officers recognized that there would be grovelling on the ground in war, grovelling in peace time was avoided. In nine out of every ten exercises, the soldier preserved an erect attitude, and in the tenth he gingerly knelt down after having carefully

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selected the right spot. The spade was never used or suggested, because it might give the soldier "a dangerous facility for going to ground", and in some battalions—not mine—skirmishers were not allowed to kneel. "That will never do," said an elderly officer. "If you let them kneel down before the enemy, they won't get up again and go on." True, they would have been shot kneeling.

The Drill Book of 1896 was not very different from the Drill Book of 1889, which was virtually the same as the Drill Book of 1874, of which Sir Garnet Wolseley had said "differed little from the drill of Frederick the Great as modified by Sir John Moore". But, as a matter of fact, most of Moore had been cut out of the 1896 edition. Musketry was not under the Company officers, but the Assistant Adjutant, who at Hythe learnt by heart four chapters out of the Red Book, and with his acquired parrot-talk he completely dumbfounded the average recruit, who, when thoroughly flummoxed, became a "trained man".

As long as abnormality is defined as the measurement of the gap between military fact and fiction, the war we were called upon to fight was totally abnormal. We knew nothing of the powers and limitations of the magazine rifle, or of what former campaigns in South Africa should have taught us. Though it is true that we could not have been expected to foresee that it would be necessary to build a three-hundred miles long blockhouse line from Victoria Road Station, in the centre of Cape Colony, to Lambert's Bay on the Atlantic, or that we should fire away 66,000,000 rounds of S.A.A.—that is, about seven hundred and fifty to every Boer who took the field—it was possible to remember that, in 1848, two companies of Cape Mounted Rifles had been the decisive factor in Sir Harry Smith's little battle at Boomplaats, and that after our defeat at Majuba, in 1881, Sir George Colley had written: "The want of good mounted troops told very heavily against us, and our soldiers are not as trained skirmishers and shots as the majority of the Boers, who from their childhood have lived in the country, and to a great extent by their guns, and are used to stalking and deer shooting."

But no, convention and tradition dictated otherwise, and when in the summer of 1899, Sir William Butler, then C.-in-C. in South Africa, warned the Government of the importance of mounted troops, he was promptly sacked. And when, later on, the Australian Government offered a contingent of troops, the War Office reply was: "Unmounted men preferred!"

And what of our enemy—the Boers? They were a primitive people who belonged rather to the days of Cromwell than to those of the Queen. They lived close to the roots of Nature, and were a mixture of low cunning and Old Testament morality. For instance, on one occasion a party of Mounted Infantry rode up to a farm over which a white flag was flying. It was met by a volley, and falling back, left behind one man dead. When the M.I. had retired, the corpse was robbed of £15 and the incident was almost forgotten. Days later, a Boer bearing a white flag approached the M.I. camp, and, on entering it, he handed over £15 to the Commanding Officer on behalf of a nameless comrade.

Our enemy's cunning was that of the hunter. He rode light, wore veldt shoes, carried a rifle and a few rounds, which he seldom wasted in senseless firing, and never encumbered his pony with a workshop of tools in order that all eventualities, except that of speed, would be provided for. Like most hunters, he was self-reliant, but discipline was unknown to him. When bored, he went on leave, and, on one occasion, Prinsloo, the Free State Commandant General, "telegraphed to General Botha at the last moment to say that he and his officers were attending a cattle sale at Harrismith on the day set for the attack, and were therefore unable to be present".

Two crucial differences were that the Boer understood his rifle and we didn't, and that the Bible was a more up-to-date manual than

the Red Book. The consequence for us was a series of initial defeats, the most serious being that of Lombard's Kop on 29th October, which was followed by the investment of Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking. These came as sledge-hammer blows to the Home Government, who at once set about mobilizing three Infantry Divisions. Next, a Fourth, a Fifth, a Sixth, a Seventh and in March, 1900, an Eighth. Before the war ended we sent out in all two hundred and fifty thousand men, and on top of this enrolled two hundred thousand Colonials. Yet, at the most, our enemy never numbered more than ninety thousand between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five, and never at any one time had more than forty thousand in the field—frequently half that number. But it must be remembered that he was mounted and that we were on foot. The third crucial difference between us was the horse: mobility was against us—the soul of war was on the other side.

That our soldiers fought as they had been trained to fight stands to their credit; for no good soldier can do otherwise. But that their best efforts stand to the discredit of the Command which had schooled them and of the nation which had taken no interest in them cannot be disputed. They had been trained for a flat race, and found themselves in a steeplechase. Fence after fence brought them down, and all their owner could do was to jeer at them. "It is a remarkable fact," wrote the German official historian of the war, "that the British, dreaming only of the hand-to-hand fight, never succeeded in achieving it." Not at all! for it would have been a far more remarkable fact had they done so, because, even in 1870, such tactics were out of date, they belonged to the Crimea and the Peninsula War.

Ignorant of the rifle, ignorant of the horse, we were also ignorant of the spade. On 18th February, 1900, we attempted, at the cost of 1,100 casualities, to carry Cronje's laager at Paardeberg by assault. But the bullet drove us back on our wits, and setting about entrenching we sapped forward. On the 26th our leading approaches were seven hundred yards from the laager; on the 29th, they were fifty, then the white flag went up.

At Pieter's Hill it was much the same, and Pieter's Hill was one of Sir Redvers Buller's battles. A year or two earlier he had written on "bobbing" (taking cover) in an Aldershot memorandum: "Battles are not won by Jacks in Boxes." Yet Sir Redvers was worshipped by his men, they would have followed him anywhere. He had the makings of a magnificent soldier; nevertheless, as a general he was a complete failure—the system had reduced his brains to tactical pulp. Though disaster dogged his footsteps, he could not learn from that grim master. He could not picture to himself what the bullet meant, and as late as 12th January, 1900, he issued the order: "The men must get to close quarters with the enemy—that is the way to victory, and to safety!" At Waterloo he would have been superb.

The men were what the system had taken from them and had left them with. They were steady and cool as invisible riflemen sent their bullets whistling over their heads; but they were unthinking. Also, they were casual, taking little care of themselves, and looking with an air of indulgence on those who did. In intelligence they were inferior to their enemy; they bunched under fire; depended entirely on their officers, were neither cunning nor cautious, and slow to profit by experience. Dangers were rarely seen until they were upon them. They advanced gallantly and retired in disgust. Nevertheless, they learned to know what war really was, and little by little began to understand that the bullet and not the bayonet was the master of the battlefield.

The Colonials were quite different. Though they lacked discipline, they were independent, intelligent and resourceful. I will quote an example, an incident which, though it ended in failure, was something no British Cavalry would have thought of. Early in June, 1900, four officers and twenty-one men of the

Kimberley Light Horse rode out thirty miles from Potchefstroom and summoned the town of Klerksdorp to surrender. Klerksdorp, though of some size as Boer towns went, at once "opened its gates," and in rode the twenty-five bold men and hoisted the Union Jack. The Burghers were told that resistance was hopeless, for the twenty-five were the advanced guard of an army. This so cowed them that they sent out messengers to neighbouring parties of Boers, who brought in their rifles and surrendered. To cut a long story short, the officer commanding this adventure over-stayed the pass his audacity had given him. He camped there for several days, and as no army appeared he and his two dozen heroes had the honour of being rounded up by an equally audacious soldier—Christian de Wet.

Until the battle of Paardeberg, won by Lord Roberts on 29th February, 1900, the initiative was with the Boers, after it, it passed to ourselves. Bloemfontein was occupied on 13th March and Pretoria on 5th June. On 29th July, Prinsloo with 4,000 Free Staters surrendered at Brandwater, and on 25th October — Kruger having already fled to Europe—the Transvaal was annexed. So considerable were these successes that the prevailing opinion was that the war was all but at an end, and in consequence Lord Kitchener took over from Lord Roberts, who was considered too big a man to sweep up the bits.

But we had misjudged our enemy, for he had no intention of being swept up, and, as organized warfare had failed him, he took to guerrilla war instead. Splitting up into small commandos, under able leaders, such as De Wet, Botha, De la Rey, Beyers, Kritzinger and Smuts, like packs of hounds the Boers swept over the Transvaal, Free State and Cape Colony, and even exchanged shots on the Atlantic coast with one of our warships. How to net them became the problem, and seeking them out in so vast a stretch of country was like looking for a needle in the proverbial haystack.

Kitchener's first plan was to fire the stack—devastation. Farms were burnt; Boer women and children herded into concentration camps; cattle and sheep slaughtered or driven in, and crops ridden over. Like most acts of frightfulness, Plan No. 1 was a complete fiasco, for instead of disheartening the Boers, it infuriated them. Also, because it relieved them of the responsibility of looking after their families, they were freer than ever to continue their raids.

Kitchener's second plan was to strike at his enemy's mobility by constructing lines of blockhouses, which split the whole theatre of war into wired-off compartments, like vast prisoners' cages, and then by means of small columns of mounted riflemen sweep clear one compartment after the other.

Considering the vastness of the area to be swept and the length of the blockhouse lines to be built, it was a piece of work which ranks with the Great Wall of China, Hadrian's and other Roman walls. The blockhouse lines could not be crossed by day, and though at night it was generally possible for the Boers to cut their way through the wire fence between any two blockhouses, normally it was extremely difficult for them to get their ox wagons and Cape carts through—that is, their supply trains—without which they could not survive as fighting forces. Further, each blockhouse line served as a protected road along which our own mobile columns could be supplied. Thus by striking at the enemy's system of supply and adding to the mobility of our own, life was made so intolerable for the Boers that on 23rd March, 1902, they sent representatives to Pretoria to seek peace. Negotiations followed, and on 31st May, peace was signed at Vereeniging, one of the terms being that £3,000,000 was to be granted by our Government in compensation for the farms destroyed.

It was during this last phase of the war that our military resurrection took place. The Red Book vanished with the Drill Book close to heel. The masses of marching men were split up into blockhouse garrisons and mounted columns, and as the latter were normally so

small as to be beneath the dignity of a General's command, they were led by Lieut.-Colonels, Majors, Captains and even Subalterns, who soon proved themselves to be as astute as their enemy.

When the war ended, what was good in our old Professional Army—its steadfastness, loyalty and endurance—remained; but infused into its veins was the blood of the natural fighter; for war is as much an animal act as is a dog fight. And whatever may be said of the old Army, it possessed and it never lost its sense of chivalry, which is the true dignity of the soldier. However clumsily it fought, to its honour and credit it fought as men against men and not as men against beasts. To quote Deneys Reitz—an enemy: "Amid all the cruelty of farm-burning and the hunting down of the civilian population, there was one redeeming feature, in that the English soldiers, both officers and men, were unfailingly humane." This was the most profound and important lesson of the war, because the chivalry displayed during a war is the true foundation of the peace which must one day follow it.

Again Deneys Reitz writes in his *Commando:*

"I rode across the valley to the farmhouse near General Clement's camp to see my friend Jan Joubert, who had been left there with our other seriously wounded, after the fight. Although not yet out of danger, he was on the mend, and he told me that the British were treating them very well. A surgeon came over nearly every day, and medical orderlies were on duty to attend to their wants. They had brought his old mother from Pretoria to be with him, and officers from the camp down the valley often brought them fruit and other luxuries. I did not stay long for fear of a stray English patrol, and rode back after a hurried greeting."

The same chivalry is to be found with our enemy. In spite of our ridiculous proclamation of 7th August, 1901, according to which all Boer leaders caught were to be consigned to perpetual banishment, when towards the close of the war that fine soldier, General De le Rey, captured Lord Methuen, he released him and sent him into Klerksdorp in his own wagon.

This true way of winning a war was misunderstood by the rising democracy at home, and, incidentally, has increasingly been so ever since. An anonymous writer of this period in his book *Words by an Eye-Witness* says:

"It is the soldiers who have been tolerant, while the great civilian world at home shouted at them to slay and spare not. Hardly a general but has not been charged with 'criminal lenience' to the captives of his bow and spear; hardly a victory which has not been discounted in the public Press because the bayonets were not pushed home over their very spring-catches in blood."

Thank heavens there were no radios in those days to pollute and corrupt.

From the tactical point of view no professional military system was so utterly discredited as ours was during the war. Another anonymous writer in his book *A Subaltern's Letters to his Wife* says of it: "The Boer has proved one fact beyond all doubt: not that irregular troops are superior to regular, but that under our present system of training regular troops are made inferior to irregulars." This was *the* tactical lesson of the war, and though at the time it was learnt it was soon forgotten. The old Generals and Staff Officers, who had been shining the seats of their pants in Pretoria and Cape Town and who had seen next to nothing of the last phase of the war, crept back into their chairs in Whitehall and Aldershot. And though the Red Book never returned, other red books were published. Yet there could be no complete turning back.

In 1899 we went out into distant backlands to kill Boers: we did not kill many, instead South Africa spiritually killed us. We were never the same again, and with the coming of Lord Haldane as Secretary of State for War, the Army was radically overhauled. For all this we must thank Paul Kruger.

To-day, half a century after we set out

upon our crusade for gold grubbers and international banksters and with two world wars intervening, the Great Boer War of 1899-1902 looks an insignificant enough affair, a mere skirmish, as it were, between embattled farmers and fox-hunting squires. Nevertheless, it still remains the greatest war that the Empire has so far fought single-handed. And in the catalogue of wars, in spite of its ignoble origins, it still stands as one of the most successful. It did establish a real and lasting peace—and why? Because with moderation peace was negotiated. The victor did not dictate the peace, nor did he Potsdam it.

Compared to the Armies of the Kings, the Army of the old Queen did not do so badly. True, its training was archaic; but was it more so than that of the Army of 1914 and the Army of 1939? In 1899 we made one crucial tactical blunder. Instead of building up our tactics on the magazine rifle and the horse, we built them on the bayonet and the ammunition boot. In 1914, in slightly changed form, we repeated this self-same mistake; for instead of building on the machine gun and the Q.F. field gun, we built on the magazine rifle and the horse, and, in 1939, instead of building on the tank and the aeroplane, we built on the machine gun and the field gun!

To-day, fifty years after the event, those old men, who once upon a time were soldiers of the Queen, have every right to chuckle. They began their war with three sieges; they did not run away as their sons did at Mons and their grandsons at Dunkirk—they stuck it.

THE HIDDEN LAKE

I AM the one who flowers beyond the tomb,
The deathless image in the mind of time,
The organ notes floating in the penumbra of cathedrals,
The thought that drowns the gunfire of the dumb.

Shadowy, with thin screaming, swallows come
About the domes of the lost architecture of man,
Solitary like a sun ray falling across the greed
Of those who lap the blood of penitential days.

Over the hidden lake, black in the gloom
The echo of time sounds like the birth
Of a son to the sad woman of the dark tower
Bringing life to the loveless who still can dream.

WREY GARDINER.

Short Story

AROUND A TEMPLE

BY R. K. NARAYAN

The talkative man said:

SOME years ago we had a forestry officer in this town who scoffed at things. He was sent down by his department for some special work in Mempi Forest and he had his headquarters here. You know the kind of person. He had spent a couple of years abroad, and after returning home he was full of contempt for all our practices and institutions. He was strictly "rational" by which he meant that he believed only in things he could touch, see, hear and smell. God didn't pass any of these tests, at any rate the God we believed in. Accordingly to most of us, God resides in the *Anjaneya* temple we see on the way.

It is a very small temple, no doubt, but it is very ancient. It is right at the centre of the town, at the cutting of the two most important roads—Lawley Road running east and west and the Trunk Road runing north and south; and any person going out anywhere, whether to the court or the college, the market or the Extension, has to pass the temple. And no one is so foolish as to ignore the God and go. He is very real and He can make his power felt. I do not say that He showers good fortune on those who bow to Him; I do not mean it at all. But I do mean that it is very simple to please a god. It costs about a quarter of an anna a week and five minutes of prayer on a Saturday evening. Ninety-nine out of a hundred do it and are none the worst for it. On any Saturday evening you can see a thousand people at the temple, going round the image and burning camphor.

I have said that the temple is at an important crossing, and every time our friend passed up and down either to his office or club he had to pass it, and you may be sure, particularly on Saturday evenings, the crowd around the temple caused dislocation of traffic. Lesser beings faced it cheerfully. But our friend was always annoyed. He would remark to his driver: "Run over the blasted crowd. Superstitious mugs. If this town had a sane municipality this temple would have been pulled down years ago . . ."

On a Sunday morning the driver asked: "May I have the afternoon off, sir?"

"Why?"

"When my child fell ill some days ago I vowed I would visit the cross-road shrine with my family . . ."

"To-day?"

"Yes, sir. On other days it is crowded."

"You can't go to-day."

"I have to, sir. It is a duty . . ."

"You can't go. You can't have leave for all your superstitious humbugging." The driver was so insistent that the officer, told him a few minutes later: "All right, go. Come on the first of next month and take your pay. You are dismissed."

At five o'clock when he started for his club he felt irritated. He had no driver. "I will do without these fellows," he said to himself. "Why should I depend upon anyone?"

The chief reason why he depended upon others was that he was too nervous to handle a car. His head was a whirl of confusion when he sat at the wheel. He had not driven more than fifty miles in all his life though he had a driving licence and renewed it punctually every year. Now as he thought of the race of chauffeurs he felt bitter: "I will teach these beggars a lesson. Drivers aren't heaven-born. Just ordinary fellows. It is all a question of practise; one has to make a beginning some-

where. I will teach these superstitious beggars a lesson. India will never become a first-rate nation as long as it worships traffic-obstructing gods, which any sensible municipality ought to remove."

It was years since he had driven a car. With trepidation he opened the garage door and climbed in. At a speed of about twenty-five miles an hour his car shot out of the gate after it had finally emerged from the throes of gear-changing. It flew past the temple and presently our friend realized that somehow he could not turn to his left, as he must if he wanted to reach his club. He could only steer to his right. Nor could he stop the car when he wanted. He felt that applying the brakes was an extraordinarily queer business. When he tried to stop he committed so many blunders that the car rocked, danced, and threatened to burst. He felt it safest to go up the road till a favourable opportunity presented itself for him to turn right, and then again right, and about turn. He whizzed past the temple back to his bungalow, where he could not stop, and so had to proceed again, turn right, go up the Trunk Road, turn right again, and come down the road past the temple.

Half an hour later the dismissed driver arrived at the shrine, with his family and was nearly run over. He stepped aside and had hardly recovered from the shock when the car re-appeared. The driver put away his basket of offerings, took his family to a place of safety, and came out. When the car appeared again he asked, "What is the matter, sir?" His master looked at him pathetically and before he could answer the car came round again: "Can't stop."

"Use the hand-brake, sir, the foot-brake's rather loose . . ."

"I can't," panted our friend.

"Clutch . . ."

"There seems to be no clutch," wailed our friend. The driver realized that the only thing his master could do with a car was to turn its wheel right and blow the horn. He asked, "Have you put in any petrol, sir?"

"No."

"It had only one and a half gallons; let it run it out." The driver went in, performed *puja*, sent away his family, and attempted to jump on the foot-board. He couldn't. He stood aside on a temple step with folded hands, patiently waiting for the car to exhaust its petrol.

The car soon came to a stop. The gentleman gave a gasp and fainted on the steering wheel. He was revived. When he came to, the priest of the temple held before him a plate and said, "Sir, you have circled the temple over five hundred times to-day. Ordinarily people go round only nine times, and on special occasions one hundred-and-eight times. I haven't closed the doors thinking you might like to offer coconut and camphor at the end of your rounds". The officer flung a coin on the tray.

The driver asked "Can I be of any service, sir?"

"Yes, drive the car home."

He reinstated the driver, who demanded a rise a fortnight later. And whenever our friend passed the temple, he exercised great self-control and never let an impatient word cross his lips. I won't say that he became very devout all of a sudden, but he certainly checked his temper and tongue when he was in the vicinity of the temple. And wasn't it enough achievement for a god?

COMMON GUILLEMOT AND CHICK. (*Photo : Alan Richardson*)

THE COMMUNAL GUILLEMOT

By RICHARD PERRY

WHAT is presumably a shortage of suitable nesting sites, accentuated by competition with other species, forces many kinds of sea-birds to breed in colonies of extraordinary magnitude and density. Their housing troubles, however, provide the naturalist with a feast of entertainment, for I do not know any natural study so full of interest and humour and, indeed, excitement as one of these sea-bird colonies. Few exceed in numbers or density those of the Common Guillemot, which breeds in tens of thousands on all suitable cliffs of the British Isles, and also on both shores of the Atlantic from Portugal and Nova Scotia north to Arctic latitudes. Actually, two races of guillemot breed in Britain, the Northern and distinctly darker race replacing the common guillemot on all Scottish coasts, except those in the extreme south-west. So closely is this regional boundary observed on the east coast that the most northerly colony of common

guillemots is one of a few thousand pairs on the Farne Islands, while the most southerly colony of the Northern race is one of a few hundred pairs on St. Abb's Head, only twenty miles distant. For guillemots, however, these are comparatively small colonies. On Lundy in the Bristol Channel, for example, I estimated that there were some thirty-eight thousand common guillemots; while on the small island of Noss in Shetland I made a very rough estimate of ten thousand of the Northern race on the single face of one cliff—and this despite the fact that during the past thirty years many thousands more must have been expelled by the intrusion of between five and seven thousand gannets, whose large drum-shaped nests, regularly spaced a foot or two apart, leave no room for more than a sprinkling of guillemots here and there on narrower portions of the ledges.

But I anticipate my story. We are prone to regard sea-birds as almost exclusively pelagic species, making only comparatively fleeting summer visits to land in order to lay their eggs and rear their young. This is very far from being the case. Actually, if you wished to follow up the full breeding history of a guillemot colony, you would have to take up your quarters on Lundy in the middle of December and remain there until early in the following August! To Shetland, it is true, you could delay your arrival by a few weeks, though you would have to carry on until the end of August. The fact is that the earliest (and no doubt the oldest) of the common guillemots return to "sit up"—stand would be more correct—on their traditional nesting ledges a day or two before Christmas. Nor are they content merely to *visit* those ledges for their hour or two in the morning. No, from the very first day of their homing they perform mating antics; "mandibulate" dead grasses—though in the present stage of their evolution they do not build nests; point down their beaks between their webbed feet, as if arranging imaginary eggs; bring up fish to the ledges; and even pretend to feed imaginary chicks! Until May, however, when their eggs are ultimately laid, their attendance at the cliffs is irregular and, in stormy weather, a week or ten days may pass without any guillemots visiting the cliffs.

SINCE I first realized how prolonged might be their association with their breeding cliff, sea-birds have presented themselves to me in a new guise—for this association is not peculiar to the guillemot only. Fulmar petrels may return to sit up on their ledges on the first day of November and will not finally leave them until the following August! Gannets are present at their breeding cliffs from January until October; while, if kittiwakes and razorbills do not actually alight on the cliffs until the end of February, they too return to offshore waters before the end of December. This early visiting is perhaps less surprising in the case of the guillemot than in those of some of the other sea-birds, which may voyage hundreds or thousands of miles from home waters during the autumn and winter. The guillemot is not a great wanderer. To observe one as much as four hundred miles from land is exceptional, and such an individual is likely to be an immature non-breeding bird, for all young sea-birds tend to travel farther afield than the adults of their kind. As a race, however, the common guillemot tends to disperse south in autumn, though no farther than the north Spanish coast; while the majority of those belonging to the Northern race emigrate eastwards to southern Scandinavian waters. Some of those, perhaps, which visit English cliffs as early as December may never leave British waters. What brings them home so soon? We can only hazard a guess that the impulse to return is associated with the regrowth of the sexual organs.

By early May all the guillemots have settled in their cliff colonies for the summer, and are massed like brown and white beetles on the sloping faces of great pyramids and the rounded summits of pinnacles, or are packed in serried ranks on the broad ledges and deep niches of colossal stacks. Up to the

top of the island from their colonies surges a crescending and diminishing, but undying, thunder of organ music from their ever clamorous thousands—for, if there is one feature of the guillemot's cliff-life dominant to all others, it is that impulse to crowd together as tightly as possible and, at the same time, as hard up against the cliff-wall as practicable: the latter situation providing the safest position for both egg and chick. So closely do they pack that the male is likely to be standing actually on his mate's short tail. This crowding leads to incessant jostling and scrimmaging among the males, and no doubt stimulates the mating impulse, which is more prevalent among guillemots than among any other birds known to me, and continues throughout the breeding season.

OF one hundred and fifty guillemots packed six deep along a ledge half, perhaps, face in to the cliff wall. Some stand, others are recumbent, asleep, white membranes nictating over their mild reddish-brown eyes, which become gleaming golden orbs when they tilt their heads up into the sun to observe me. The other half face outwards—a row of silvery bellies and a forest of slender brown heads and necks, which dart backwards and forwards, fearfully, at my sudden appearance on the cliff edge above. Typical penguins they look, so full-fed with britling that their fat white bellies are as spherical in shape as an egg. Standing so upright, with brown cloaks cut away back from silver breasts, the line "fashioned so slenderly" springs to mind. There is much affectionate billing between mated pairs, and the male nibbles his mate's head incessantly—an attention which is not always welcomed and is sometimes impatiently evaded by the latter. She is more intent on posturing herself over an imaginary egg and maintaining her precise position on that square foot of rock on which she will eventually lay her real egg. It is these irritating attentions from the hot-blooded males that are mainly responsible for the interminable roar of cawing emanating from a guillemot colony. They result, too, in much jostling of adjacent pairs and sudden stabbings with sharp beaks. This darting petulance of rival males may develop into a furious fight with slashing beaks and beating wings, with the one finally spread-eagled on top of the other, or with both falling backwards off the cliff and dropping down to the sea, where they continue to fight, until both are exhausted or one gives way and threshes its way hurriedly over the sea with beating wings.

A variant of the common guillemot is adorned with a curious white ring round its eye, with a white cord depending from it across the cheek. On Lundy, where the number of these "Bridled" birds was only one per cent of the total, they proved useful in the identification of individuals. From these one learnt that not only might these foot-square territories be occupied by the same bird from the first day of its return in December, but that they might be thus occupied year after year. Some idea of the age to which a guillemot may attain is afforded by one adult ringed on the Isle of Man in May, 1938, and recovered there in February, 1948, and another adult ringed on the Isle of Skokholm in July, 1937, and recovered on the Cornish coast in April, 1948. With these records we may compare that of an albino puffin—another member of the auk family—which is reported to have returned to a Faroese colony for *sixty* years, though it did not come ashore during its last ten years!

IT is in the latter half of May, that the females finally lay their single huge eggs and, when the males are away fishing, sit peacefully side by side, hour after hour, panting from the heat of the sun, occasionally preening the heads and throats of their neighbours. Three useful instances, in which common guillemots were paired up with "bridled" birds, suggested that the males took an equal share in incubation with their mates, though there appeared to be considerable individual variation in this. The change-over on the egg took place mainly in the late after-

A BRIDLED GUILLEMOT
(Photo : C. A. Gibson-Hill)

noon or evening, and the number of partners standing by their mates after noon gradually dwindled, until in the evening few but sitting birds remained. The off-duty birds formed a sportive necklace of chains and links on the sea below the cliffs in a column two or three thousand strong, while hundreds more preened themselves on the reefs. The cork floats of the lobster pots afforded them endless hours of entertainment jumping on and off, and were never free of their respective king-of-the-castle.

It is the guillemot's misfortune that she is an extremely nervous bird, so that at the slightest alarm numbers of them would desert their eggs and stream off the ledges, leaving behind a bountiful harvest for the gulls, who took an enormous toll of them: so heavy indeed that out of one hundred pairs of guillemots on an exposed ledge not one might hatch its first egg successfully.

When all the gulls nesting on nearby sidings and cliffs had become aware of this harvest of eggs they became exceedingly bold, pitching on ledges among the guillemots and filching eggs from those parents momentarily inattentive: but, though very anxious to do so, they would not face the lunging beaks of those actively defending their eggs. The herring-gulls generally swooped down on a deserted egg, but a great black-backed gull (as large as a wild goose) would coolly walk along the ledge past the shrinking guillemots.

But no amount of persecution—except by rats and man—can seriously diminish the numbers of a successful species, and (with the aid of second and third layings) large number of guillemots begin to hatch out young towards the end of June, after incubating for varying periods of from four to six weeks and possibly longer. The parents brood their young in turn very closely for several hours at a stretch, usually changing over when one or other of them arrives with a fish. The feeding of the chick is an amusing operation to watch, as it is never permitted to take the fish until the brooding parent, or both, has made a little "tent" with its wings, thus screening the actual transference of the fish from the covetous attentions of neighbouring adults, who are always ready to steal from an unwary fisher. This sheltering "tent" also serves to prevent the chick from staggering off the edge of the ledge in its eagerness to secure the fish. For the first few days the chick exhibits all the nervousness of its parents and will scream the house down, if deserted by its parent, until the latter covers it once more, its favourite position being under her wing with its beak pointing out between her wing and back. By the time they are a fortnight old, however, they have overcome this initial nervousness and clamber all over the limited precincts of their ledges, bobbing up and down, as their parents continually do.

IT was in the second week of July, that I noticed that some parents were in a great hurry to deliver their fish to their chicks and get down to the sea again. It was clear that the parental impulse was waning after so long an attendance at the cliffs, and that their departure from the cliffs was imminent. It was at this stage that I came up against a problem I was most anxious to solve. Here were the chicks on their nesting ledges, but none of them as yet possessed any flight feathers. Even the eldest among them had only tiny wing-arms feathered with secondaries. How then were they to get down to the sea, which might be as much as three hundred feet below their ledges, while in many instances the latter were situated on crags with a sheer drop below on to naked reef? What followed I count as the most fascinating experience that can befall a naturalist in the British Isles.

It was at nine o'clock one evening in the twilight of mid-July, when the oldest chicks were some three weeks old, that I was astonished to see a parent and its chick swimming out to sea from one of the gullies, while at the mouth of the gully were three or four more parents, who continually uttered their explosive cawing calls. From the ledges on either side of the gully the larger chicks piped excitedly and incessantly a musical penetrative *queewee, queewee, queewee*—a cry that I shall never forget. As the light faded, so the parent guillemots became frenzied with excitement, and I knew—this was one of my great moments as a naturalist—that one problem was about to be solved. Then suddenly I realized that one chick had left one of the higher ledges and had hit the water below with a resounding plop. Its parent, who had flown down with it, swam up the gully to it, squawking with excitement, and away the two went to sea.

THEN, for half an hour and more, I watched another parent gradually drawing her chick out along a narrow neck of rock, employing almost every cry in her vocabulary. Though frequently squatting down, the chick made its way inch by inch along the promontory, attracted by its parent who, while shuffling backwards, often "tented" her wings invitingly. Finally the chick reaches the extreme point of the promontory and pauses for a little while, before making a little leap out into space, to go sailing down with desperately whirring wings and hit the water with a great plop, its parent following it down calling anxiously. As they head out to sea a posse of parents waiting at the entrance swim up excitedly to identify it, and there is some scrimmaging before its parent can finally evade their attentions. When I left at dark many chicks were still going down, and from the top of the cliffs I could hear others calling all round the island.

So, despite their lack of flight-feathers, the chicks did actually get down under their own power and could even exercise a certain amount of steerage control in avoiding obstacles on the way down. Not all, however, could be induced by their parents to leave the first night. Some, indeed, remained on their ledges a further six or seven nights after their parents had first tried to call them off, the majority not venturing down until fully three weeks old, though some went down when only ten or twelve days old. But what of those below whose nesting ledges lay scree or reefs? They could hardly drop from a height on to these unharmed. To solve this problem I went out a few evenings later to the Devil's Chimney, a two-hundred foot stack on the Atlantic coast of the island, on whose flat summit some two hundred and fifty pairs of guillemots were massed. When I arrived, soon after nine o'clock, I found these latter in a state of turmoil with battles being waged on all sides, for the very good reason that numbers of parents were edging and jostling and "tenting" their chicks out of the dense mass of birds in the centre of the stack to its outside, continually trespassing upon other parents' territories in so doing. Once, at the edge of the Chimney the chicks would peer hesitantly down at the sea so far below. Their position here was one of hazard, for the

COMMON GUILLEMOT WITH BROODING CHICK UNDER WING.
(Photo : Alan Richardson)

stream of adults, constantly alighting on and flying off the summit, knocked them sprawling. It was in this way that I was a witness of the unbelievable when, in one of these scrimmages, an outer edge chick was shot into space, to fall one hundred and fifty feet upside down and crash horribly on a jagged bulge of rock scores of feet down the chimney, and rebound thence into the boiling surf thundering on the reefs at its base. I glued my eyes to my binoculars to see if I could locate its floating corpse: but it was no corpse I saw, but the chick itself diving under each curling surf-crest and actually making headway through the breakers, to be joined in a couple of minutes by its faithful parent, appearing from nowhere as usual, who led it out into the great swell of combers rolling and pounding in from the Atlantic.

THIS chick's survival was so incredible that I assumed it to be a fortunate accident; but a little later another chick, which had gradually been manœuvred by its parent to the edge of the Chimney, stood looking down at the sea, heedless of frequent pecks by two nearby adults, as if concentrating on its objective. Very shortly it deliberately leapt off and made a very fine "flight" of some hundreds of feet out and down on to the outermost reef, where both its parents suddenly appeared to guide it out of the boiling surf.

Well, there it was, clad in a protective armour of fat, down and feathers, these infant guillemots could contravene all natural laws with impunity. On a July evening, seven years later, I was a witness once again, from a yacht's deck this time, of this miracle when between the hours of seven and ten o'clock some three hundred guillemot chicks dropped and "floated" down from their ledges on the sheer face of the six-hundred foot Noup of Noss. Many of them smashed

down, unharmed, on the rock platforms at its base. It was not the actual drop to the sea that was their main hazard, but the savage attacks of the gulls, who every evening slaughtered a quarter perhaps of all those chicks fledging that night.

BUT, again, sufficient survived to maintain the species, and by the end of the first week of August on Lundy and the middle of the month on Noss, this great exodus had been completed within the space of one month. Until September, or October perhaps, each fledgling would be accompanied on its travels by a parent. By that time it would have moulted, acquiring its flight feathers, and learnt to fish for itself. Thenceforward, no doubt, it would tend to associate with guillemots of its own age, for though some young guillemots return to their breeding colonies in their first and second years, it is probable that they do not actually breed until they are three or four years old.

ROSES

CRIMSON and laughing in the morning sunlight,
We are flowers that crown the feasting heads,
Whose petals, strewn,
Greeted the dancing girls, and shed
Delicious licence, secrecy, till dawn
Showed them our wilting leaves, too late.

We are the drunkard's and the martyr's crown.
On the dank wall of reeking catacombs
They painted us,
Symbol of love and death, with hands
That shook with foreboding of the day when fresh
Roses should crown them, facing death alone.

Whiter than clouds that dazzle round the sun
We climb the Virgin's bower, our golden hearts
Release their sweet
Fragrance, but know the path,
The bitter path she and her Son must tread.
And when the Mother kneeling by the Cross

Holds in her hands a rose, half white
Half red, whose bitter crown
Wounds her Son's brow,
Whose Blood on our petals stains yet, stranger, see
In this one flower that saint and sinner wore,
As token yet, His fragrance and His crown.

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH.

Short Story

THE DEVOTED HUSBAND

BY A. G. MORRIS

IT was a country road, neither very wide nor very good, but sufficient for the local traffic to one or two neighbouring villages.

Sir Charles Bingham's drive led straight down and across the narrow footpath on to the road; but on that particular night in November the house, the drive, the gate and the road itself were almost invisible, so thick and impenetrable was the fog. Indoors Sir Charles and his wife, Millicent, were quite alone in the snuggery, for the daily maid, pleading fog, had left early. It was almost nine o'clock.

Sir Charles was a tall, distinguished, angry-looking man, with an eye glass, who was irritated perpetually by his wife, and by the humiliating knowledge that he had only his pension, whilst she controlled all the capital in her own right.

He hankered for the days of a century ago, when a husband took over the entire control of a woman's property.

"When it comes to the pinch," he brooded, "I have to go to her, cap in hand, like a damned beggar. . . ."

He glanced across at Millie, so quiet and docile, in her chair by the fire.

"Looks as meek as they make 'em. My word, the weaker sex. . . ."

BUT Millie, the best and most obedient of wives in most ways, could dig in her toes about money. Her father had been a prominent industrialist, and some of his shrewdness stuck to the mild daughter, in spite of her nineteenth-century flavour. The sheets smelt of lavender and all the socks were darned in order. Jam and marmalade were home made, and the house was run with smooth sweetness, but . . .

"No, Charles, I'm sorry. I don't see fit to sell those shares." He was up against that all the time.

Hang it all, he'd earned his title at The Foreign Office. He'd made Millie My Lady, but if he wanted to buy racehorses or . . .

Then she would say, firmly, "I don't like squandering money, Charles . . ."

"But a few good horses might bring in a lot of cash. . . ."

"And they might not, but you've still got to have them stabled, groomed and fed. No."

Betting too. He had to be content with keeping inside the limits of his pension, and if he went too far she put on the screw.

"Next time, Charles, I shall not feel inclined to settle your accounts. . . ."

As if he were a raw boy of twenty, a son, not a husband. You could never tell, just by looking at women. He remembered how, when he was a young man, the suffragettes had broken windows and thrown stones and cut up golf greens. And did they look like Amazons? No, by heavens, they were like a Mothers' Meeting, headed by the Vicar's wife. . . .

SO there sat Millie, with a high, old fashioned collar, and lace at her wrists, ready to wait on her husband, hand and foot, black his boots, make his bed, cook his meals, use influence on his behalf, and yet . . . Always that. And yet . . .

Lately, too, she had been uncommonly independent in several ways. Twice she had gone alone to Melford by bus. Usually they went together, once a week, by car: shopping in the morning, lunching at The Castle, and doing a cinema in the afternoon.

Pretty slow for a man like Sir Charles.

He wouldn't have minded a couple of days or a couple of weeks, on his own, but not in Melford. London or Paris.

Somewhere with snap and sparkle.Women? He wasn't too old. Still turned his head to look at them again, and they liked him. He was thin and game. Knew his stuff. Not much cop being pushed away in the country with Millie. Came of marrying for money. She'd been talking a lot about something all the evening, but he'd only grunted, not hearing half her blather.

But what would SHE want alone in Melford? Close as an oyster. Hell. Up to something.

"I must go upstairs a moment," she was saying now. She paused in the doorway, "Don't forget, dear, that . . ."

SIR CHARLES took up the poker and hit her hard on the back of the head. A second blow to make sure.

She fell, without another sound.

He had wanted to do just that for months, or was it years? You couldn't do Paris or London on eight hundred a year. Millie had between two and three thousand of her own. Fifty or sixty thousand, tucked away in gilt edged securities. And he couldn't touch a penny of it? But now? Bar a few small legacies it would all be his. If . . .?

He remembered the fog outside, and an idea struck him.

First of all he washed his hands, though it was quite unnecessary. Then he wiped the poker on an old cloth, although there was no trace of blood. He burnt the cloth.

He felt cleaner and safer after that, but Millie still lay there, sprawled, with her skirt drawn high up her legs. She would never have been so immodest in life.

"Never had good legs," reflected Sir Charles.

He picked up the telephone.

"Is that you, Straker? Are you busy tonight? Millie and I thought of strolling over . . . Yes, I know, the fog's devilish bad, but we'll be careful crossing the road. So long."

The fog was to be his ally. . . . Some car was bound to pass. Yes. A car in a fog.

Sir Charles felt his wife's pulse, just in case. Not a thread. She was pale as 'death and utterly still. Felt colder already. Picking her up in his arms he went into the hall. There, with complete composure, he dressed her in coat and gloves and hat.

NEXT he carried her out into the fog and down to the foot of the drive. Just inside his own gate he waited, hidden. Not a sound. Not a movement anywhere.

"Mustn't be too long," thought Sir Charles. "May seem fishy to Straker."

He peered out cautiously along the road. Headlights? Yes. A car. It was creeping and swerving in the layers of vapour, every now and then sounding a horn. The lights looked yellow and ghostly. The car was nearer. Now? NOW.

He shouted, as if in dreadful alarm, "Look out, Millie, a car. For God's sake take care. Oh! . . ." It seemed to the driver of the car that a woman stepped out suddenly into the road, and fell under the very wheels.

He heard the man's scream of warning, but it was too late to do much. Mercifully he was going very slow. He clapped on the brakes and swerved.

Again he heard the man's voice in the darkness, "You careless swine, I think you've killed my wife. You've knocked her down. . ."

For a moment the young man, in the car, could not move. He was thinking, "This can't happen to me. I'm not that sort. I've got a good job. Engaged to be married. Driving down to stay with my Aunt . . ."

"Get out of that car. You've run down my wife, you blackguard . . ."

Eric Spindle opened the door and blundered out into the road, feeling his way.

THE other man flashed a torch in his face, blinding Eric, "God, its young Spindle" . . . So that was what his wife was trying to say. Probably had been saying all the evening . . ." Don't forget, my dear, that . . ." So

that was it. Eric Spindle, coming to talk over his wedding. His wife's only nephew. He had forgotten that altogether. Hadn't been interested. But he hadn't bargained for fastening manslaughter on to the boy.... Never mind, he had to go on with it. Better than swinging.

"Uncle Charles, I was looking for the drive. What have I done? I can't have hurt Aunt Millie. It's impossible . . ." "I didn't know it was you, Eric," said Sir Charles. "But I'm afraid it doesn't alter the facts."

"I don't believe I ever touched her," exclaimed Eric, gaining courage. "The wheels are a foot away from her."

"You threw her forward," insisted Sir Charles. "Can't lie, even for the family . . ."

"What'll they do?"

"The police must decide."

The young man was almost in tears." Are you sure she's dead?" Sir Charles was down on his knees in the road, by his wife. "Yes," he said, looking up.

"It's all so bloody horrible. My Aunt Millie. And what am I to say to Joan, just before our wedding?"

"Pull yourself together, man," said Sir Charles. "Doesn't it occur to you that I have feelings too? Come on, we must carry her home."

"Ought we? I mean, the police. Sorry, Uncle . . ."

"Hell, Eric, we can't leave her out here in the road. Besides I'm a Magistrate, and so is Straker . . ."

THEN came a man, running, with a torch, from farther down the road, "Is that you, Bingham? It's Straker. I heard shouts. I was expecting you . . ."

Sir Charles thought, "Hang that 'phone call now. May seem queer, me forgetting young Spindle."

But he called out, boldly enough, "Thank heavens, it's you. There's been an accident. My wife, knocked over by a car."

"The fog! Oh! Christ, and I warned you . . ."

"I could kick myself, Straker. Rang you up, when Millie was upstairs. Clean forgot her nephew was coming. Ironical that it was his car . . ."

Eric Spindle broke in, nerving himself to speak, sensing hostility, "But surely Aunt Millie didn't forget that I was coming? Why . . ." Sir Charles, conscious that he might have put a foot wrong, said, "Of course your Aunt remembered her precious nephew. She said to me, 'You go over alone to see Colonel Straker, but I'll just walk down to the road with you, to see if the boy is on his way!" "Oh God!" said Spindle, miserably.

"And she was so damned eager to find you," continued Sir Charles bitterly, "that she jumped out at the first car . . ."

"It wasn't my fault, sir. I swear it," protested Eric. "I never touched her . . ."

"You're not suggesting that Sir Charles pushed his wife, are you?" asked Straker, sarcastically.

"She might have slipped. Hit her head or something. The wheels . . ."

SIR CHARLES burst in, almost hysterically, "Here we stand arguing. And my wife, lying in the road, dead.... You only think of yourself, Spindle. . . ."

"I quite agree," said Straker. "We must carry her in at once. Leave the car, in case the police . . . quick, there may be some hope." "Please God," breathed Sir Charles.

Eric floundered out confused apologies, "Never meant to . . ." Reverently they carried Lady Bingham into the house and laid her upon the big sofa in the snuggery. She was limp, still and cold. Young Spindle, conscious of innocence, but feeling like a criminal, stood uneasily in a corner. He had so looked forward to a happy week-end with his Aunt, talking all about Joan and the new house.

Aunt Millie had written, saying she had many things to tell him, and he had much to tell her, all the overflow of a young man in love, without mother or father. Now this . . . A corpse on the sofa. The police in the offing.

As soon as he came in Sir Charles had taken a stiff brandy, offering nothing to his nephew. Straker also had a drink. Before this the two older men had treated Spindle as an outcast, but now, feeling warmer, Sir Charles spoke more kindly, "I'd like to hush this up, my boy, for the family's sake, but some things can't be covered."

ERIC struggled again to protest, "It must have been coincidence. A heart attack."

"Have you seen the bruises and contusions on her head?" asked Straker.

Spindle dumbly shook his head.

"All the same," comforted Straker, "you may get off lightly, young fellow. The fog's a sound line of defence."

"Great heavens," cried Spindle, "I never hit her. I was crawling looking for the gates."

Sir Charles was on his guard, "But I shouted, Eric, and you went on."

"I know. I heard you, but I pulled up on the spot. I felt nothing at all."

"Look here," cut in Straker, "time's important. We must ring the police. Look funny if we don't."

"Quite," said Sir Charles. "You do it, Straker, I'm too far gone."

"My dear old chap, I understand. I'll ask them to bring their own doctor, to look at the injuries."

Sir Charles nodded, and sat with bowed head.

STRAKER was just picking up the 'phone, when a voice spoke faintly, "Don't forget, my dear, that Eric is coming to-night..." Sir Charles, white as a ghost, sat up sharply, wondering what might come next.

All three men ran to the sofa; Eric, with a tremendous sense of reprieve by miracle, Straker utterly astonished and delighted, babbling, and Sir Charles, apprehensive, cold in the stomach. "I'll ring for her own doctor," said Straker. "Prentice, isn't it? No need for the police now . . . If she lives."

"She's alive, Uncle, she's alive, thank God," cried Eric. Sir Charles, after one glance at his wife, half collapsed and took more brandy. Nobody thought it anything but natural reaction.

"Poor old feller," said Straker, patting his shoulder, "it's going to be all right . . ." and turning to Eric, "You can thank your lucky stars, young man."

Spindle, almost beside himself with joy, had an arm round his Aunt's shoulders and was trying to make her sip some water.

"Best wait for the doctor," suggested Straker.

Aunt Millie relapsed into silence, but Sir Charles's mind was invaded by doubts and fears.

"How much does she know? What will she say?"

The immediate prospect made him sweat and he groaned within himself.

"She wouldn't? No . . ."

THEN Dr. Prentice arrived. "I don't quite follow what's happened?" he asked, looking round.

"You talk," said Sir Charles, brokenly, to Straker.

"Lady Bingham was anxious about her nephew," explained the Colonel. "Went down to the road to look for him. Got knocked down in the fog."

"Good God," said the doctor.

"It was my car," blurted Eric, "but I swear . . ."

"No time for excuses," cut in Prentice. "I must look at the patient".

After a moment he said, "Concussion, terrible blow on the back of the head."

"But she was lying in the road, with her face towards the car," said Eric. "I don't . . ."

"Thrown forward and turned over," interrupted Sir Charles, hastily. "I saw . . ."

"Funny all the same," said Straker.

And Sir Charles felt that his legs were trembling.

"Suppose?"

"We must get her to bed," said Prentice. "I'll try to send a nurse out from Melford. Hang this fog."

MILLIE stirred and opened her eyes. Sir Charles was on tenterhooks.

"Thank God I didn't kill you, Aunt Millie," said Eric, fervently.

She smiled at him, faintly, but said nothing.

Sir Charles took out his handkerchief. His forehead and face were like a river.

Later that night he was allowed to look into his wife's room. "Want to make sure she's all right, you know . . ."

It had seemed proper to make this request.

She was alone, lying in her bed. The nurse had withdrawn for a moment, grumbling persistently about the fog, "Pulled out on a night like this . . ."

Sir Charles sat down close to Millie.

"Went by bus, all by myself . . ." she whispered.

"Still wandering," he thought, comforted, "Hit her from behind, she can't have seen."

"Ought to have told you. Changed my Will."

"What!"

"All going to Eric. I brought him here to tell him. Getting married soon. Safer that way . . ." Not better or wiser. SAFER. So?

Sir Charles stared at her frail body, and shivered. He had risked his neck for nothing and, as he said goodnight, his hand went to his throat.

WHEN he left the room Eric was waiting outside, in miserable anxiety, "Is she all right, Uncle Charles? Is she going to get well?"

"You have come out of this far better than you deserve," said Sir Charles, severely.

"You mean . . .? Oh! Uncle, I'm so glad."

"I don't think that my dear wife is in any further danger . . . now," said the devoted husband. "Its been touch and go."

Eric made sounds of sympathy and understanding, being himself a man in love.

"But," concluded Sir Charles, "I must take much greater care of Millie in the future. I realize now that I could not possibly live without her. How one learns."

He brushed away a tear.

THE CONSUMPTIVE

HER agony slides through me: am I glass
That grief can find no grip
Save for a moment when the quivering lip
And the coughing weaker than the broken wing
That, fluttering, shakes the life from a small bird
Caught me as in a nightmare? Nightmares pass;
The image blurs and the quick razor-edge
Of anger dulls, and pity dulls. O God,
That grief so glibly slides! The little badge
On either cheek was gathered from her blood;
Those coughs were her last words. They had no weight
Save that through them was made articulate
Earth's desolation on the alien bed;
Though I be glass, it shall not be betrayed,
That last weak cough of her infantine head.

MERVYN PEAKE.

FILM CRITICISM *and* STAGE CRITICISM

By HUBERT GRIFFITH

Many Films.

I HAVE just had five or six weeks of intensive film-going as a professional film-critic. I cannot pretend to be strictly accurate as to dates, for the life is unhinging. One goes to a film at 10.30 in the morning, to another at 2.30 in the afternoon, and occasionally has to slip into yet another at 5.30. These hours are conditioned by the needs of the critics for the daily, evening, and Sunday newspapers for getting their copy in on time. But I am not certain that the circumstances make for balanced judgment. A horrific German murder-film such as "*The Blum Affair*" (Curzon Cinema) is a little difficult to stomach soon after breakfast on a fine August morning. But not more so—or perhaps rather less so—than a glamorous Hollywood musical in glorious technicolor. However, I will pay out one or two points of view that have occurred to me in the course of my experiences.

One is my admiration for the creditable and dignified job that is done by my fellow film-critics. It would need quite a lot of thinking about to pinpoint any pair of dramatic-critics who enjoy the prestige and power (the deserved prestige and the deserved power) of, say, Caroline Lejeune and Dilys Powell in their respective Sunday newspapers.

Many other of the daily, evening, and weekly critics are also admirable, giving a frank, vivid, readable, and unbought opinion on anything and everything that is put before them. And believe me, they have plenty to exercise their judgment on.

Point two:—film-criticism is in the ascendent, while dramatic-criticism is in the descendent, partly at least because film-critics in general are given by their Editors much more *space*, linage, wordage, column-length, whatever you care to call it. This has an effect not only on their output and readability, but also on their zest for their job.

Years ago H. G. Wells, in one of his Prefaces, was discussing the decay of the English Short Story. He (who wrote them brilliantly) said that the craft of the English Short Story had decayed because there was not, at that time, any market for it. "An author likes to be read." Switching to the realm of the novel, he remarked—perfectly truly—"if any mad millionair were to commission masterpieces from novelists—and to pay enormously highly for them—on condition that he should read them himself and that, then they should be burnt without being published—he would find no takers!" In other words, a writer in any form of literature wants to be read even before he is paid.

To make the point once again by way of literary criticism:—if literary criticism were confined for the majority of newspapers to three or four lines of comment on each major novel once a month as it came out (and this is what, on many papers, theatre-critics have to expect), there would be no literary criticism. The craft would die out. There being no market for it, it would expire.

As regards the theatre-critics, I think that the Editors are wrong in according so little space to them. In the first place, they are wrong in thinking that the Provinces (where most of national dailies and weeklies search for their circulations) "aren't interested in the London theatre". This I know to be fallacy, from personal knowledge. I have lectured on the London theatre up and down the country to as far north as the Border and beyond, and

been listened to by interested audiences. Interested because, as soon as I have sat down, members of the audience have jumped up and fired a hundred questions down my throat. I have mentioned Shaw. They have dragged in Chechov and Pirandello and Auden and T. S. Elliot. You cannot beat a northern audience for interest in (and knowledge of) the modern London theatre.

Secondly, I think that many Editors of so-called "National" newspapers make a mistake in thinking that the films have outmoded the living theatre. As someone said about God, "If He did not exist it would be necessary to invent Him". Similarly, if the living stage did not exist, it would be necessary for the cinema to found, create, and endow one. Where do they get their film-stars from?—except from those trained on the living stage? I asked the other night in mixed (but artistically intelligent) company, "Which one of the twelve top-ranking Hollywood stars has not been trained in one form or other of the living theatre?" After long deliberation *one* name was mentioned. On reference to "*Who's Who in the Theatre*" it was found that the ranking Hollywood star had done twelve mortal years in a Provincial repertory company. . . .

AND what, as a film-critic coming fresh to the job, is there to write about? There seemed to me a great deal. It has been of course the "dead" season in the London theatres. The only major event, the new Shaw play, took place at Malvern. The cinema knows no dead season, and there has been an endless spate of new films.

Of course there has been a terrible amount of bathos, that I, as a newcomer, was probably more acutely sensitive to. There was an English film featuring Miss Margaret Lockwood (who I am told is our leading box-office attraction) that was so frightful in the ineptitude of its story, acting, and dialogue that I had to stay on after it for a Walt Disney cartoon of Donald Duck to restore me to sanity. There is the endless and maddening tradition of exaggeration—"bigness," "luxury," "loudness"—about the worst of the American films that not only infuriated me, in my naïveté, but that shot to pieces, in many cases, the very meaning of the story. In one, "*Too Late for Tears*," a young girl is said to be so afraid of "poverty", of "squalor" that she is ready to commit murder three times over, of her husband, her lover, and her sister-in-law, to keep possession of a packet of dollars. But the first flat that she is shown in—long before any question of the dollars arises is a luxury flat of very extensive proportions. Hollywood prefers to make nonsense of its own story because it cannot bear to photograph a set that is not lush.

Again, in "*My Dream is Yours*", some impresario is in search of a crooner, a girl who shall have "sumpin' different". Ultimately one is found, Miss Doris Day, who seemed to me to have sumpin' much the same as all other crooners. But they decide that her originality shall be that of a "soft" crooner. She starts crooning softly. But Hollywood can't take this, in panic-fear that its world-audiences might not be able to hear—so the amplifiers turn her voice up to the volume of the fog-horn of the *Queen Mary*. Hollywood must by now have made most American cinema-audiences tone-deaf—and is in process of converting England.

But there has been some first-rate stuff; and as most of the films will be circulating in suburban and provincial cinemas for months to come, it may be of interest to name them. Outstandingly the best of the recent lot is an English film, Carol Reed's "*The Third Man*". Most of it is shot in post-war Vienna, on the authentic spot, as all who know the city will recognize, and not on a studio-floor. It is in the Four-Power zone, that mysterious nightmare area where even to arrest a pickpocket the police-forces of four nationalities have to come into operation. Mr. Carol Reed is brilliantly intelligent, and he takes trouble. The original story is by Grahame Greene, and he has got Mr. Greene himself to write the

dialogue. As in "*Fallen Idol*", this sort of mature intelligence pays dividends.

The German film above mentioned, "*The Blum Affair*," is again so good as to make many recent American crook and murder films look like three-ha'penceworth of coloured (or uncoloured) celluloid. It is set in the period of the late 'twenties, and is founded on an authentic case. A German industrialist (a Jew) is put on trial for his life for a murder that he has not been remotely connected with. He gets off finally; but his closing words are, "The end of this is not yet". One is allowed to hear the rattle and the thunder of the approaching tumbrils of the Jewish persecution. The film is suberbly acted, right down to all its smaller character-parts. The translation of the dialogue (in captions) is sensitive, intelligent, and colloquial. Those who do not know German may be afraid of only missing very little.

"*House of Strangers*" is Hollywood cinema at its best. Edward G. Robinson is an Italian immigrant to the east-side of New York. Starting in a hairdresser's shop, he has made himself a very rich man by founding a bank and charging extortionate interest. He has been brought up in the jungle tradition that "dog eats dog", and his sons, whom he bullies and insults, grow up to believe that rat eats rat. The atmosphere of hatred in that household is not pretty, but it is memorable, and dramatically effective, chiefly because it is done without any physical violence. There is a dinner-party scene where the old man, with his sons and his daughters-in-law around him, keeps the gramophone screaming Italian opera at the top of its voice, partly because he likes it that way, but chiefly because he knows that they and their womenfolk loathe it. You won't like the film, but it is worth seeing.

"*Command Decision*," again American, is also worth seeing. It is over simplified and over sentimentalized. If you were being unkind to it, one could say that it tries to show how one American, in command of a Bomber Group, sets out single-handed to win the war. (The Battle of Britain, fought by the English is mentioned in an aside.) Of course the selection of bomber-targets was made at a much higher level (Cabinet and combined Chiefs-of-Staff) than that of a mere Brigadier (Mr. Clarke Gable). The chaps who did the bombing and who perished in their thousands, are almost completely left out. But the film does concentrate on the agony of mind of one commander—himself an experienced pilot knowing all the risks involved—having to send out his own friends daily to their death. I didn't like it. I know bomber stations from personal experience. There was one sequence where the station commander, an expert pilot, has to "talk-in" an inexperienced pilot (actually the air-gunner) to the runway, by the use of the radio-telephone, that I found almost sickeningly actual and factual. But it did what the cinema alone can do—provide a moment of drama that could have been arrived at by no other means than this—and also, please the heavens, a little more human understanding.

"*The Lost People*," the film version of the stage play "*Cockpit*". The original author has been retained to do the dialogue, which is a daring innovation. It is about "displaced persons" herded together in a commandeered opera-house in Germany. The substitution of a wedding scene (especially with little Mai Zetterling in it) is a definite improvement on the opera singing scene in the stage version. Please go to see it.

"*Winter Meeting*," with Bette Davies in it. Miss Bette Davies has been so good for so long that permanent film-critics tend to forget how good she is genuinely, and rather take her for granted. Which is a serious mistake.

In "*The Barclays of Broadway*" Mr. Fred Astaire and Miss Ginger Rogers dance (for the few moments they are allowed to do it) so exquisitely that the result is a poem. The plot of the film is unspeakable.

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

THE LYSENKO AFFAIR

By MALCOM MUGGERIDGE

WHEN Galileo in the seventeenth century got into trouble for making certain observations about the earth's course and construction, his everlasting fame was assured far more effectively than it would have been by his mere astrological discoveries. In the same way, the Lysenko affair in Russia, though it deals with a subject—genetics—with which only experts are familiar, is likely to be included among those famous controversies which are always remembered because they involve a matter of fundamental principle.

Mr. John Langdon-Davies has produced an excellent handbook to the Lysenko affair which he aptly calls "Russia Puts The Clock Back".* Everyone should read it and think about it. It is the best of all documentation on the Soviet régime. More than that, it sets forth in a simple, factual way the essential character of a conflict of deep significance for all mankind. The data Mr. Langdon-Davies uses cannot be challenged. It is not based, like an account of, for instance, the institution of slave labour, on hypothetical or unverifiable evidence, but on official documents such as the verbatim report of the proceedings of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences in the U.S.S.R. in August, 1948, at which Lysenko's position was established. In the eyes of Communists and fellow-travellers it therefore carries the authority of holy writ, and their usual devices of referring to hoary old falsehoods are inapplicable.

Mr. Langdon-Davies begins by providing a short course in genetics for laymen. The matter at issue is, he points out, a relatively simple one—whether it is true, as Western geneticists have believed, and with one notable exception still believe, that there is a "continuity of the germinal substance" and that "body changes produced in a parent by environmental influences are not inherited by the offspring . . . because offspring are not the product of the parent's body but only of the germinal substance which that body harbours". Or whether, as Lysenko insists, "the foundation principles of Mendelism-Morganism are false . . . do not reflect the actuality of living Nature and are an example of metaphysics and idealism". In other words, Lysenko is convinced that what parents do "affects the inherited characteristics of their offspring", whereas the result of all the experimentation which has been undertaken in the West, and in Russia for that matter, in connection with this matter over the past eighty years points to an opposite conclusion.

Now, as Sir Henry Dale remarks in his foreword to "Russia Puts The Clock Back", there is no reason whatsoever why Lysenko, or anyone else, should not attempt to challenge beliefs which have long been taken for granted by geneticists. Such a procedure is entirely in the tradition of scientific investigation. "We may think it unlikely", Sir Henry writes, "that modern genetics will be found to have so vulnerable a basis" but "even if we suspect, from the evidence of experts who have met him, that Lysenko is really an ignoramus, we cannot thereby exclude all possibility that he may have facts and arguments to present which the world's geneticists, long used to thinking in terms of Mendelian theory, may have overlooked or undervalued". There is no question here of Lysenko not being given a chance of presenting his case. In point of fact, he has been given abundant, and even extravagant, opportunities of stating his position. Western geneticists, it is true, have not been impressed by his statements; and still less have they been impressed by the experimental justification

* *Russia Puts the Clock Back.* By John Langdon-Davies. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

offered. This, however, is not the point. What is at issue is that Lysenko, by invoking the support of the Communist Party, has been able to silence all opposition to his theories, and to install them throughout Russia as the only orthodoxy in genetics, any other type being treasonable, and therefore criminal. More than that, even outside Russia the political support accorded to Lysenko by the Russian Communist Party has had its effect.

Take, for instance, the case of Professor J. B. S. Haldane. For years past he has been teaching the very "Weissman-Mendel-Morganism" which Lysenko has so roundly condemned and made into a dangerous heresy. Yet because he is a Communist, he has found it necessary to equivocate, to plead for time to read all Lysenko's reports, and generally to take lying down an attack which, if it had come from any other quarter, would certainly have aroused his wrath and invited the exercise of his considerable controversial skill in refutation. Oddly enough, according to a quotation given by Mr. Langdon-Davies, Professor Haldane foresaw just such a development as long ago as 1932. In a volume of essays entitled "The Inequality of Man", he emphasized that "genetic facts involve the dogma that men are born unequal as well as different". In one of the essays—"The Place of Science in Western Civilization"—he wrote:

> "There is an enormous interest in Russia in biology, because evolution is part of the Communist faith . . . Now, I am not going for one moment to suggest that there is not a very grave danger for science in so close an association with the State. It may possibly be that as a result of that association science in Russia will undergo somewhat the same fate as overtook Christianity after its association with the State in the time of Constantine. It is possible that it may lead to dogmatism in science and to the suppression of opinions which run counter to official theories, but it has not yet done so . . . The test of the devotion of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics to science will, I think, come when the accumulation of the results of human genetics, demonstrating what I believe to be the fact of innate human inequality, becomes important."

Everything has happened just as Professor Haldane foresaw, but, confronted with the fulfilment of his prophesy, he remains silent. By their investigations, geneticists, as he feared, have tended to show that heredity is a much more potent factor in the development of human character than environment, whereas Soviet ideology requires the opposite proposition. The perfectability of man and the development of a perfect human society can only be believed in if, as man's environment is transformed, so is he transformed. Should this not be true, the whole thing falls to the ground. In these circumstances, the Kremlin has decreed that the geneticists must be wrong, and that whoever suggests otherwise is an enemy fit only for the outer Fascist darkness.

The first rumblings of trouble were heard in 1936, when a certain Solomon Levit, director of the Russian Medicogenetical Institute, and a faithful Party member, got into trouble for some investigations he made into human twins. Unfortunately for him, his results indicated that twins born from the same fertilized egg tended to display the same characteristics, whereas twins arising from two separate eggs, and therefore carrying different sets of genes, displayed different characteristics. Though Levit was induced to make a "confession of scientific guilt", his Medicogenetical Institute was closed down, and he himself disappeared and has not been heard of since. In the eyes of the Russian Communist leaders, Mr. Langdon-Davies writes, "genetics had bitten the hand that fed it. Even in the citadel of Communism the evidence of the geneticist piled up in favour of what Haldane calls the inequality of man. A limit was being set to the extent to which environmental change at the hands of the U.S.S.R. planners could be expected to alter human nature permanently for the better".

Since Solomon Levit's unhappy experiments with twins, the process which led to his liquidation has proceeded apace. Weissman-Mendel-Morganism has come to be a Right-wing deviation of the most odious sort—in Mr. Langdon-Davies words, "a sign of subservience to bourgeois capitalist imperialism, because its findings do not fit some of the dogmas of dialetical materialism". Those who have continued directly or indirectly to uphold it have all got into trouble or been forced to make abject recantations, and sometimes both. Again to quote Mr. Langdon-Davies, "you are a dialectical materialist or you are a traitor with no civic rights whatever. If you criticise the State philosophy, you disappear from view. You do not have to criticize directly. If you publish the results of a scientific experiment which casts doubt on the State philosophy, that is sufficient. Unless your potatoes and tomatoes behave dialectically, you are for it".

The same position has been stated even more forcibly by Prezent, an ardent Lysenkoist: "Anyone", he states, "who does not understand the enormous social-class significance of our controversy will fail to understand the essence of our discussion". In other words, "to believe in the chromosome theory is to be on the bourgeois side of the fence".

The climax of this affair was reached at the August meeting of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences of the U.S.S.R. referred to above. At this gathering one or two feeble efforts were made to confute Lysenko, but they were exceedingly half-hearted. For instance, a certain Academician, V. S. Nemchinov, went so far as to say that he "did not share the view of the comrades who assert that chromosomes have nothing to do with the mechanisms of heredity". But he was given a stormy and ribald hearing, and in any case was only a statistician. The dramatic moment came when Lysenko, in winding up the debate said:

> "The question is asked in one of the notes handed to me: What is the attitude of the Central Committee of the Party to my report? I answer: The Central Committee of the Party examined my report and approved it. (Stormy applause. Ovation. All rise.)"

After this, three of the small minority who had ventured to criticize Lysenko at once got up and recanted what they had been saying a few hours previously, and a fourth wrote a letter to *Pravda* in the same sense.

As a whole, the Verbatim Report of these proceedings, Mr. Langdon-Davies justly writes, presents "a picture of a nation in an advanced state of chauvinistic disease, less international in its outlook even than Nazi Germany, determined to build about its boundaries a wall impregnable to foreign ideas, a Russia indeed as obscurantist as under the Czars, as full of religious fanaticism as under the Orthodox Church".

Mr. Bertrand Russell has raised the question of why the Soviet Government should have concerned itself so actively with what is, from the layman's point of view, a technical matter. He suggests that the only plausible explanation is "one which implies that arbitrary power has driven the rulers of Russia to something like insanity". "It is not surprising", he goes on, "that Lysenko's theories should be attractive to Stalin, who has found it relatively easy, as he supposes, to change one animal—namely Man. Throughout his wide empire no voice is raised against him, no resistance is offered to the rapid extension of slavery and starvation. Whatever he may want of human beings, he has but to nod and it is done. What are wheat grains that they should be less amenable?"

Be that as it may, there can be no question but that Russia has now embarked upon a course of megalomania and obscurantism. The clock has indeed been put back—back to the time when earnest geologists, like Edmund Gosse's father, were trying to demonstrate that geology upheld the account of the creation given in the Book of Genesis, back far, far beyond that, to the darkness before our civilization began.

ABBÉ GODIN AND HIS MISSION

FRANCE PAGAN. By Maisie Ward. *Sheed and Ward.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

RATHER more than half of this book is the work of the late Abbé Godin and describes his mission to the dechristianized proletariat of France. "Savages," wrote Godin, "have kept in their age-old tradition something of primitive revelation. Here we find nothing, sheer emptiness". The Abbé noted as characteristics of this pagan world an absence of maternal instinct. "A custom on the increase is for fellow-workers in a shop or office to club together to give a girl for her wedding present everything she needs for an abortion all done up in a pretty little box with directions for use. Another revealing fact is that photography of a naked girl has become quite a regular thing. The girl gives it to her fiancé and he keeps it in his notecase. Bestiality among women is regarded as mildly sinful, but 'It does no harm to anybody'."

From this *milieu* individual conversions are made, but there is no real hope for the rechristianization of the masses until the converted working men have their own communities. Superhuman efforts have been made to bring Christianity to the mass of French proletarians, a "hundred churches have been built" but the net results have been disappointing.

As things are the worker who is converted faces difficulties comparable with those of the pagan converted in a foreign mission. He has to leave his proletarian world, his friends, relatives, Sunday outings and manner of life. They are leaving what they know for a parochial world which "seems to them timorous and shrunken, terribly *bien pensant*, terribly old-maidish . . . Catholic, of course, but soaked through with a bourgeois mentality, coloured by bourgeois qualities and by bourgeois defects". The workers cannot be integrated into an ordinary parochial community.

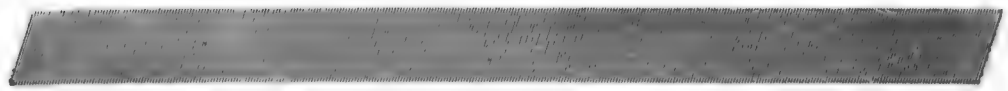
Abbé Godin's remedy is to adapt to pagan France the principles laid down by Pius XI for the foreign missions, to make the missions as native as possible, "native in everything that is not sinful". A native clergy to begin with. "To become a Christian", said the Pope, "must not mean to abandon one's own world, St. Gregory advised St. Augustine, the apostle of England, not to destroy the pagan temples, but to destroy the idols and replace them by the cross". Of Japan, the Pope said," an effort must be made to destroy the common impression that to become a Christian meant even for a good-living pagan, a total change in his way of life and a break with Japanese traditions so complete that the Christian becomes a man apart, isolated from those who do not share his faith".

The Jocist movement, a missionary movement addressed particularly to workers has done great work but has only enjoyed a very limited success because "a missionary movement cannot exist without a missionary community and this community is lacking".

Christians must stay *in their own world* and redeem it.

There must be parishes within the parish, "a sort of personal parish made up of all those proletarians who want to be Christians, but not like those other Christians who in their eyes represent a class that has exploited and enslaved them".

From this conviction there has developed the remarkable movement of the Priest-workmen, priests who have permission to wear lay clothes and to work in the factories. Bishops give permission in such cases for Mass to be said in the evening. Here is a passage describing such a Mass: "More beautiful than the flowers were the careful genuflections of the priest who had been working all the day at the docks and whose movements evidenced the weights he had been carrying. The mystery of the Redemption is taking place at the very spot where it is needed."



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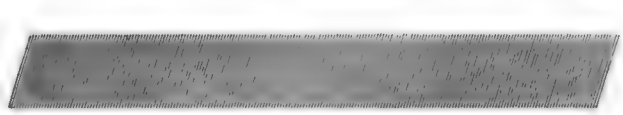

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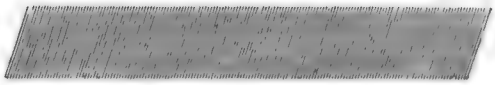

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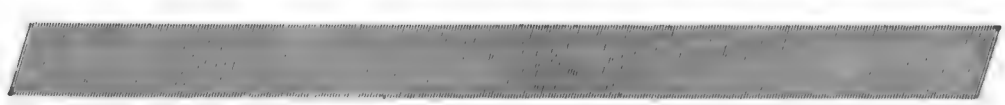

The first fifty pages contains a biographical sketch by Maisie Ward of Abbé Godin, the lovable and inspired eccentric. Maisie Ward has the rare gift of retaining unimpaired her critical faculty even where she has a genuine reverence for those of whom she writes. Her criticisms of Godin's paraphrases of Scripture are just and to the point. The publican is compared to the poor proletarian and the Pharisee to the bourgeois, but the truth is "that the publican was probably richer than the Pharisee, and certainly just as bourgeois".

ARNOLD LUNN.

MORGAN THE MAGNIFICENT

THE GREAT PIERPONT MORGAN. By Frederick Lewis Allen. *Gollancz.* 15*s.*

PROBABLY the most poignant moment in *Death of a Salesman* is when poor, little futile, frustrated Willie Loman is still insisting, at the very moment of ultimate psychological defeat, that the secret of "success" is "popularity" and is suddenly and brutally asked, "Why? Pierpont Morgan wasn't popular!" Morgan was, in fact, the very reverse of popular: he was an orge. A pierrot song of the time—the early 1900's—narrated how one who was tired of finding all the earth owned by or reserved for Morgan went to Hades to be greeted by an Imp crying:

Get off that spot,
We're keeping it hot—
That spot's reserved for Morgan.

The great Pierpont—with the nose, but not the *panache*, of Cyrano—is more popular with his new biographer than with most others. Mr. Frederick Lewis Allen honestly tries, as he says, to avoid the habit of many previous biographers of writing "on the assumption that if a great capitalist did something which could be ascribed to anyone of five motives, the duty of the historian was to ascribe it to the worst of the five, brushing aside all evidence which suggested laudable intentions and eagerly underlining any evidence which suggested base ones". In the result, he, perhaps, leans a little too far the other way. He is sometimes even a little *jejune*. The almost cantingly religious millionaire, with his almost repulsive appearance, hardly packed his yacht and his train-car with women from the platonic motives which Mr. Lewis suggests, nor did they so gleefully join in his travels because of the innate charm of the man, rather than because of the gifts he was in the habit of making to his favourites with so lavish a hand. It is not, however, Morgan's private life which is his new biographer's primary concern, but his business life and his significance to and for his age. Mr. Allen, in the mood of Macaulay to Machiavelli, finds, on the whole, that Morgan's all-embraciveness —that tendency towards financial monopoly and dictatorship—was good for the time, because it was a time when rabid competition was seen at its worst. He believes, probably rightly so, that the old man's defence of himself, and his money octopus before the Pujo Inquiry was sincere. He does not gloss over Morgan's early addiction to shady partners, but he relieves him of much of the responsibility for the worst episodes, as when his associate Simon Stevens and he sold outmoded carbines to General Fremont, to be used in the Civil War, for $22 each which they had bought *from the War Department itself* for $3.50.

Morgan's beginnings were unusual; unlike so many of his contemporaries who made huge fortunes, by a mixture of open and dubious means, he did not begin in any lowly business capacity: he was born in the purple of finance. This, no doubt, accounts for his habit as a boy of playing, not at Indians or engine-drivers or pirates, but at company direction and book-keeping. After his very early days as a bond selesman and as a dealer in such commodities as outmoded carbines, he leapt at an age when most others were learning the technique of their business into a commanding position in Anglo-American finance. He was a strenous worker,

as well as a man with a flair for money making. Events swirled him into the great and disgusting battles for the American railroads and their control, a war in which, to give him his due, he was the relative Galahad of those knights of the crooked table who so deformed American finance and politics in the late Victorian years. It was to him that Grover Cleveland—that most honest of Presidents—turned at the time of the gold crisis. His own finance House and its affiliates conquered wider worlds than even the Rothschilds had won. Through this progress Pierpont Morgan—with the fell, facial disease making his bulbous nose more horrible with each decade, ill health always afflicting him, a primitive dissenting religion always holding him, a love of pretty women always distinguishing him—remained a much-travelled, much travelling man of culture, a genuine connoisseur of art, a lover of good architecture, and a most devoted father and father-in-law. These aspects of him shine through Mr. Allen's biography, which is written in good American, but not too colloquially. One is still left pondering whether, however good for his own age Morgan may have been, he and his fiscal legacy to humanity have been quite good for the generations which have succeeded him. In his youth one of his professors hoped he would become a "Don" of mathametics; in early life he thought of retiring: his first pathetic marriage to poor little consumptive Mimi was a tragedy from *La Vie de Bohème*—if, at any one of these turning points, he had been deflected, the world would have lost a picturesque and still enigmatical figure, but there might have been no Wall Street domination as we know it, and perhaps (odd thought) no Russian revolution in 1917. Mr. Allen's life makes one think better of Morgan, but it does not much affect ones thinking on "Morganism".

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THE VALLEY OF ST. IVES. A. H. Bryant. *Gollancz. 10s. 6d.*

THE SHELTERING SKY. Paul Bowles. *John Lehmann. 10s. 6d.*

THE JOURNEY OF SIMON MCKEEVER. Albert Maltz. *Gollancz. 9s. 6d.*

THERE can be no poem more discredited to-day than Henley's *Invictus*; it is very rarely that any character in a modern novel is the captain of his soul. Even Colonel Judd, the sanguine, capable British officer who organizes life in the southern Italian port where Mr. Frost sets *The Dark Peninsula*, proves to be inwardly vulnerable, while so much time is spent analysing the frustrations of Lieutenant Mulholland and Private Thompson, a pair of literary types who would ruin any novel, that the plot does not get underweigh until the reader has almost given up hope. This is a pity, for Mr. Frost has caught the mood of time and place very well. The action takes place during one of those pauses which occurred in the Italian campaign, when the soldiers in the south were waiting on events in the north, when men lived uneasily in the present with the past and the future both asserting claims. Colonel Judd, Lieutenant Mulholland and Private Thompson have all known and been influenced by a dead poet known as "A", and this dead hand lies heavily on the book, but the character of Judd shows that when Mr. Frost can stand sufficiently far away from his subject and energize his observation in the service of a plot, he will make an interesting novelist.

A FAMILIAR American theme is handled with superb confidence by Mr. A. H. Bryant, who is, we are told, a commencing novelist, like Mr. Frost. Mr. Bryant has enlisted all the tricks of the trade and a measure of genuine artistry to tell a story which has style and impetus but whose theatricality no art can disguise. The Valley of St. Ives is a beautiful stretch of the eastern American countryside, preserved by the rich as a paradise for the horse and his riders. The other institution of the valley is an academy, consciously run on rather archaic English public school lines. One of its junior masters falls in love with a girl in the smart hunting set. They have nothing in common; he is poor, shy and a little priggish; she is an evident neurotic, obsessed by a dead father and a living horse. The story of their marriage rings a whole peal of bells before it ends in melodrama, yet the book, in spite of this, has something more than entertainment merit. It rouses a genuine sympathy for the man and it conveys with conviction the fusion of passion and sentiment from which romantic love is born. If, next time, Mr. Bryant will take his people from life and not from American mythology, his work will demand serious consideration.

THE SHELTERING SKY is also, it seems, a first novel, a remarkable and disquieting piece of work. Every character in it is either mad or quite gratuitously unpleasant, we are spared no single nauseating detail of African dirt and squalor, yet it has a kind of perverse beauty and it impresses as a criticism of modern life which, though exaggerated to the limit of rationality, is nevertheless valid. An American couple, Porter and Kit Moresby, drifting round the world to try and find an environment which does not disgust them, make a journey into the interior of the Sahara. They are as maladjusted to each other as to the world; Porter loves Kit but cannot approach her, Kit loves Porter but can neither soothe nor protect him. These people are not explained, they live in a social void but they have life. From the opening of the book where

Porter reluctantly returns to consciousness from sleep, we feel the spell laid upon us. Every scene and character, romantic, horrible or grotesquely comic, gives the sense of participation in a nightmare experience. Even the episode where Kit, abandoning the dying Porter, is taken into the train of some travelling Arabs and becomes wife to one of them, has a dream-like vividness which redeems it from the suspicion of being a sophisticated version of *The Sheik*. The book is completely devoid of comfort, almost of pity; behind the shivering sky is a vision so terrible that no one can endure it; the only refuge is madness or death. Porter escapes to one and Kit to the other. The writer has used the background of north Africa more brilliantly than anyone writing to-day, except Camus, with whom he has obvious affinities in his nihilism and his sense of the hostility of the world. I wonder whether he is the Hemingway of the forties?

ONE of the curious merits of popular American writing is the way in which it not infrequently composes an admirable entertainment from materials entirely devoid of conventional glamour. It takes a bold writer to choose a poor old working man of seventy-four, crippled by arthritis and living in a Home on a scanty pension, as the hero of an adventure story. Yet this is what Mr. Maltz has quite successfully done. Simon McKeever bitterly resents the futility and idleness of old age; hearing of a doctor in Los Angeles who can cure arthritis, he sets out, with a poor handful of dollars, to hitch-hike. The book tells the story of his adventures on the way. It is a little too slick, it passes from humour to sentimentality a shade too briskly, in parts it reads like the scenario of a Mr. Deedsish film. But it does hold the interest, it tells us a good deal about everyday American life and one thing it conveys with force and deep feeling, the physical humiliation of being old and poor.

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Short Notices

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

ERASMUS, TYNDALE AND MORE. By W. E. Campbell. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 15*s.*

THERE is no better way of coming to a real understanding of any large problem, political or religious, than by studying it through the eyes of those who had actually to deal with it at the start. As time goes on the appearance of a problem is subtly changed by the industrious work of apologists, who find all manner of reasons for looking at it in a way which never occurred to the original protagonists. Mr. Campbell's humane and sympathetic treatment of the three controversialists whose names appear as the title of his book is an admirable instance of the method recommended. Erasmus is, of the three men chosen, the one to whom he is temperamentally most allied, perhaps because he betrays almost instinctively a dislike of controversy, which came more naturally to More, a publicist with all the keen penetration of a lawyer, and to Tyndale, an eloquent pamphleteer, than it did to the charming personality of one to whom the clamour of mankind was as uncongenial as the conversation of Monks. More and Tyndale were among the bravest of men; and both suffered death for their convictions. Erasmus (who can say?) might have acted as heroically as they, if it had been required of him; but he was not the stuff of which martyrs are made. He was a humanist, profoundly and intensely humane. He hated war; and he was too wise not to see clearly the futility of a great deal of the fighting, both national and individual, that goes on in all ages and upon all kinds of issues.

Froude observed a hundred years ago that "the meaning and direction" of the movement in which these three men were involved "even still was hidden from us": and his remark remains true in respect of many

Protestant estimates of it. Tyndale would have been shocked at the way in which the Bible is now handled by his spiritual descendants. Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, on the other hand, were alive to the fact that the Church and the world both stood in the sixteenth century at a crossways of enduring significance. Mr. Campbell, however, must be left to elucidate the tale, as he does very excellently through the medium of the three lives he has selected. The great addition that he makes to our knowledge in England is his account of the death of Erasmus, who, the researches of Father Villoslada may be said to have established, so far as it is possible to do, died with the rites of the Church and in the case of a former pupil, the date of whose ordination as a priest is only wanting to make the chain of evidence complete. It is the habit of those who follow, though at a great way off, in the track of Tyndale to insinuate or to let it be supposed that Erasmus as a Christian Humanist was better disposed towards Luther than the Pope. This is as historically wrong as to affirm that Montaigne was a sceptic. Both men were perfectly aware that the Renaissance, which they loved, demanded a very different line of thought than the Reformation, which they feared.

ALGERNON CECIL.

THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

SPAIN, 1923-1948. By Arthur Loveday, O.B.E. Foreword by Sir Robert Hodgson, K.C.M.G., K.B.E. *Boswell Publishing Co.*, pp. 286. 12*s.* 6*d. net.*

THERE does not appear to be one comprehensive book on the Spanish civil war, at least not in English. And yet the war was an event of great significance and importance. It has often been described as the prelude to the Second World War. The intervention of Germany, Italy and Russia—and the failure of Great Britain and France to prevent intervention—was indeed the prelude to the greater conflict. But the character of the civil war was

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little affected by intervention. Essentially, it was a Spanish phenomenon.

Public opinion in this country was deeply divided, and is still divided—for or against General Franco. But the issue was not as simple as it was, and still is, painted.

The Spanish people were deeply divided. But they were almost as deeply sub-divided. The Nationalists were far from homogenous and had frequent internal crises, but they retained considerable cohesion throughout. The Republicans, on the other hand, had little cohesion. The war began by a military rebellion against a quasi-legitimate republican Government, but that Government retained little control over the forces that rallied in its support. On the territory that owed it nominal allegiance, at least four revolutions broke out—a radical revolution in the south, a less radical (though bloody) revolution in the middle region, a Catalan particularist revolution, and a radical anarchist revolution which had its headquarters in Barcelona. The particularist movement in the Basque country also had a revolutionary character. In addition to these movements, there was a small, but well-organized Communist Party, which exercised an internal terror with a view, not to defeating the forces commanded by General Franco, but of dominating Republican Spain. The defeat of the Republicans was chiefly the result of their internal conflicts. Had they won the war, it is probable that a series of confused conflicts would have followed and, perhaps, the break up of Spain.

Both the nationalists and the republicans enjoyed a large measure of popular support. The revolutions were popular revolutions—the more radical, the more popular. In the villages on republican territory, there was an extensive jacquerie. The massacres, characteristic of Spain, were partly systematic. But they also had a spontaneous character.

It is doubtful whether a comprehensive study of the civil war is possible. To make such a study, it would be necessary to collect evidence in many parts of Spain, a task which present conditions probably render impossible. The student must be content with fragmentary accounts of the conflict as seen from one side or the other. Every account that adds to our knowledge is welcome. Mr. Loveday's book, written from a point of view that is sympathetic to the Nationalists, and based on long experience in Spain, is welcome for this reason. It adds touches here and there to the general and still wretchedly incomplete picture. *The* book on the Spanish civil war has yet to be written.

F. A. VOIGT.

AN AMERICAN PARANOIAC

THE STILWELL PAPERS. By Theodore S. White. *Macdonald.* 18*s.*

GENERAL Joseph W. Stilwell's Papers, published in the U.S.A. last year, have now been republished in Britain. In his introduction to this English edition General Fuller writes that the Papers provide "a most revealing close-up of the American outlook on the world in general and ourselves in particular, as projected through the personality of a typical American".

With that view we may agree, with one small reservation; "a certain type of American" would surely have been a truer phrase. We have only to compare the paranoiac Stilwell with those great American leaders, Eisenhower, MacArthur, Bradley, Clark, – civilized soldiers, who handled Allied problems with such conspicuous success— to realize that Stilwell was not a universal type.

General Stilwell was a fighting soldier, whose determination and courage were alike superb. Unfortunately, he had a one-track mind, and so could see nothing but his own narrow and personal objective; that he pursued fanatically, nursing a savage indignation against all the world beside. He had no time for men or things other than American. In his attitude to the British his inferiority complex stuck out a yard: that it was that caused him to blaspheme against those whom he

recognized to be in an older tradition than himself. His extreme Left Wing sympathies made his anti-Imperialism an obsession; he saw Imperialist design behind almost every British proposal in the field of higher strategy. Thus he proved the most difficult, disloyal and uncomprehending of allies.

Even in relation to his own men General Stilwell lacked understanding. His was the responsibility for driving to mutiny Merrill's Marauders, the only American unit in his force. And he was prepared similarly to sacrifice the Chindits who had passed under his command. That he was given an independent command where he had to deal with Allies was a misfortune for all concerned—himself in particular. In a wholly American force and under a strong commander-in-chief, his magnificent fighting qualities would have had the scope they deserved. Psychologically, his powers provide a most interesting study.

H. G. MARTIN.

THE HEART OF ENGLAND

HOME GROUND, A JOURNEY THROUGH THE HEART OF ENGLAND. By Douglas Goldring. *Macdonald and Co. Ltd.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

DOUBTLESS pernickety readers will quarrel with Mr. Goldring over the sub-title of his book, on the grounds that no seaside county can rightly be considered a portion of the heart of England. However, after visiting Kent and Dorset, he did journey — as his sub-title suggests — northwards through Wiltshire, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, and Leicestershire to Nottingham; then southwards through Lincolnshire, Rutland, Huntingdonshire and Bedfordshire; and so through London back home to Kent once more. That journey surely covered what most people think of as the heart of England.

What is so refreshing is that Mr. Goldring is dead honest every foot of the way. No matter whether he is writing of places or of people, he tells the reader exactly what he

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saw and heard, and his own opinions concerning the same, no matter whether either information or opinion may please or displease. For example, his visit to Malmesbury produced this extraordinary reaction.

"Malmesbury, let me in honesty admit, has everything to recommend it. Its abbey church, let me repeat, is one of the finest Norman monuments in England, its historical associations are of the first importance, it is moreover charmingly situated on the top of a not too steep hill, with the Avon winding round its feet. Nothing could be more attractive. And yet I fled from it, I know not why, as from a corpse."

Again, he points out the rather unpalatable fact that in spite of press and broadcasting the great majority of country people to-day are not interested in international affairs. Any honest countryman knows this to be true, for the simple reason that when country work enables country people to make a decent living during peace, they ask for nothing better, and naturally tend to become self-satisfied and self-centred.

So, if time and circumstance prevent you from following in Mr. Goldring's footsteps, you cannot do better than make the journey in his company by reading *Home Ground*. For it contains so much more than the ordinary guidebook . . . unrehearsed conversations with all sorts of countryfolk, where the pub beats the hotel and vice versa; shrewd comments on local brews; useful information about bus-services; and all the little things that count. An added attraction is the book's leisurely pace—evidently neither Mr. Goldring nor the Heart of England suffers from palpitation.

A. G. Street.

MR. PATMORE WANDERS

Italian Pageant. By Derek Patmore. *Evans. 9s. 6d.*

REVISITING Italy after an interval of fifteen years, Mr. Patmore set out to supply a need he had sensed for books about Italy by the younger generation of English (or, as he would say, "Anglo-Saxon") writers. Confining himself to the provinces of Tuscany and Umbria, he travels, "Guide Bleu" in hand, sometimes by car with an Anglo-Saxon friend, sometimes by motor-cycle with a Greek. "See things with your heart and not only with your brain," Bernard Berenson told him, and if at times he appears unduly resolute to be guided by this advice and to insist on the quickness of his sensibilities, he does communicate something of his love of Italy and the Italians, who are unlikely to thank him for using the Spanish word "fiesta" to designate an Italian festival. Disclaiming the intention of writing serious art criticism, he impresses us as contracted to say something about each of the masterpieces he sees, rather than impelled to express what he felt on confronting them. When words fail him, he sidesteps into "I cannot do better than quote"—John Addington Symonds, D. H. Lawrence, Janet Ross, Walter Pater—finding it "curious enough" that Ruskin should have observed the influence of the Etruscans on the Florentine school of painting. A silly but pretentious passage by Adrian Stokes is called in to express Mr. Patmore's contempt for Puritanism. The excellent photographs will stimulate the reader's desire to visit Italy, where the book should prove a helpful supplement to the "Guide Bleu".

Basil Harvey.

CREATIVE PHILOSOPHY

Insight and Outlook: An Inquiry Into The Common Foundations of Science, Art and Social Ethics. By Arthur Koestler. *Macmillan. 25s.*

FOR a creative artist to proceed to a philosophy of ethics is perhaps unique and, as the author of *Darkness at Noon*, Köstler is well known as a great imaginative writer. In this book, whose subject matter

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has been engaging him for some twenty years, he works out an inclusive theory which embraces creative thinking, ethics and æsthetics, and he has naturally evolved one or two new terms as tools for his original and embracing theory. Of these the word "bisociation" is especially fruitful, and may perhaps be called the key to his main thesis. It appears that his analysis of the comic led him to this word. He explains the comic as resulting from the flash where two distinct and usually incongrous "fields" are suddenly related. This induces the release of pent-up emotion in laughter, which he calls a luxury reflex. "Sustained humour (Don Quixote) results from a sustained bisociation of a character or situation." His theory of the comic is comprehensive in a way that cannot be claimed for Bergson's, still less for Freud's.

With "bisociative originality" as the principle of the comic he proceeds through scientific discovery (the eureka principle) to apply it as the principle of epic, dramatic and lyric art, and to the transcendental. The name eureka principle, deriving from the fact that Archimedes was pondering how to ascertain the cubic capacity of a crown while having his daily bath, and the bath spilt over, was itself born in a comic incident, with the added comedy that Archimedes rushed out of his bath naked, shouting through the streets "Heureka ! Heureka !"

Mr. Köstler has effected so many bisociations of "independent operative fields" that in a short review one can but say that the book may well justfy the claim of the publishers that it may "do for philoso phy what Einstein attempted for physics in his 'unitary field theory' ".

The some one hundred and fifty books of his Select Bibliography, honest inasmuch as Köstler has clearly read and mastered the books cited, is of interest as containing so many books that one has read or wants to read again.

BRIAN LUNN.

JOHNSON WITHOUT TEARS

THE CONVERSATIONS OF DR. JOHNSON. Extracted from the Life by James Boswell. Edited with a preface by Raymond Postgate. *John Lehmann.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

THE title and sub-title of Mr. Postgate's book which is now reprinted in the Chiltern Library, sufficiently indicate its nature and scope. Granted that such a production was justified, I suppose the job could not have been done much better than it has been by the present editor. This book will doubtless be welcome to many readers, who wish to acquaint themselves with Johnson the conversationalist, and feel that they will never find the time to get through Boswell's original life in bulk. Such readers are numerous enough, in all conscience. We have to accept that paradox in present age, when we live our lives surrounded by machines designed to save human labour, and hence, one would have supposed, to augment leisure.

One may take some comfort in remembering that Johnson himself, for all his learning, was a lazy reader, and once maintained that very few books were worth reading right through from cover to cover. And all that is most entertaining, most celebrated, and much that is most profitable, in Boswell's *Life*, will be found here in full measure. Mr. Postgate himself, in his Preface, subscribes to the received opinion that Johnson's reputation is owing to his conversation as preserved by Boswell, not to his writings. But the conversations inevitably present us with only one facet of Johnson's complex personality — the elderly, clubbable extravert, with his combination of crotchets (what successful literary man, after all, is without them) and sound common sense. But there were many other Johnsons — the poor and struggling student and bookseller's hack, the lonely and sometimes tormented neurotic, the charitable and humble Christian, the craftsman who gave us such consum-

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mate models of brief biography and considered criticism as the best of the *Lives of the Poets*, and the intermittent, but real, poet. Boswell is a great biographer because he presented something of all these facets, as well as painstakingly recording the details of the Doctor's conversations. No abridgment can do full justice either to him or his subject.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS.

HAMLET RE-EXAMINED

HAMLET AND OEDIPUS. By Ernest Jones, M.D., F.R.C.P. *Gollancz.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

ENGLAND'S leading psycho-analyst has now worked up his famous essay on Hamlet into a monograph, which shows almost as much knowledge of Shakespearian literature as it does of psychological theory. To treat an imaginary figure as a "case" and to deduce from his lines in a play the nature of his infantile experiences is bold; but Dr. Jones makes a convincing defence of his methods. He argues that Shakespeare's powers of observation were so abnormal that he gives modern science all the evidence it needs. Shakespeare knew all about psychoneurotics, although he did not know the explanation of their behaviour. Dr. Jones goes further and, arguing that a character must have its origins in the recesses of its creator's mind, suggests that a study of Hamlet throws light on Shakespeare himself. He claims that the recent death of the poet's father strongly influenced the development of the play.

The central thesis is that Hamlet's delay in killing Claudius, which he repeatedly confesses himself unable to explain, was caused by an inhibition, a feeling of guilt that the incestuous relation of his Uncle to his Mother was one that he himself coveted. The discussion of the resemblances between the Hamlet story and other myths is particularly interesting. Even readers who do not accept the full psycho-analytical gospel will enjoy the force and clarity of the book and admit the justice of many of its interpretations. Dr. Jones's concentration on family relationships perhaps leads him to underestimate the political content of the tragedy.

R. G. G. PRICE.

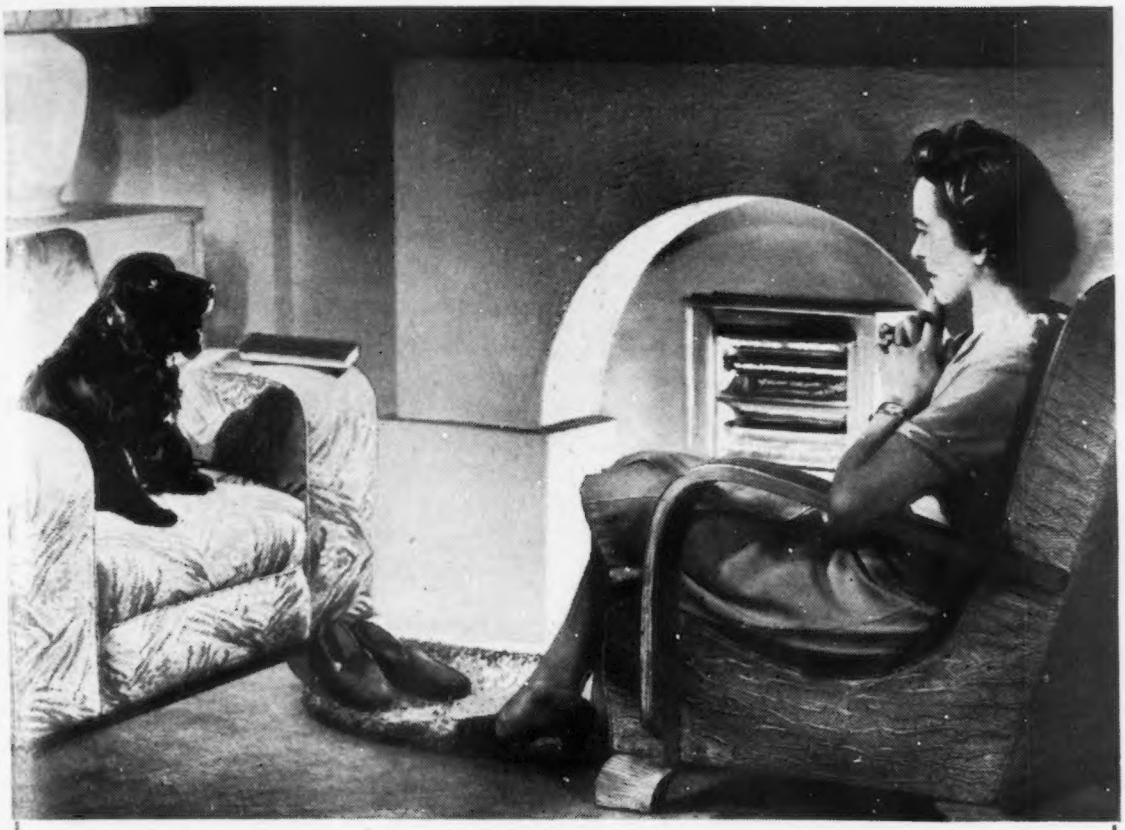
NUNC EST BIBENDUM

STAY ME WITH FLAGONS. By Maurice Healy. *Michael Joseph.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

THIS new edition of an old favourite is at once a tribute to the memory of its author and a delight to all lovers of good wine. The views of Maurice Healy appear with a sort of running commentary by Colonel Ian Campbell; this is in the main commendable apart from the propagation of the ghastly heresy, rightly repudiated by Healy in the text, that champagne can be followed by vintage port. Champagne can surely only be succeeded by cognac or armagnac, though it is true that after more than five centuries burgundy also may fraternize with armagnac without any unpleasant consequences.

For the rest Colonel Campbell and the author are in general agreement, and the discriminating reader is not likely seriously to quarrel with either. In particular, they are unquestionably right about an old Madeira gaining rather than losing strength with the passing of the years. Since the Second World War, I too, have been fortunate enough to drink a 1792 Madeira and it "certainly lacked no quality that one associated with a noble wine".

Among much that is excellent there is one piece of advice in these pages that it would be well for every host and hostess to take to heart. "Let me protest at once about the ordinary method of approach to a great wine. The average host bids you to dinner, and, without a word of warning, sets you drinking Lafite 1864, or something like that. The result is that he is robbing you and the wine of a great deal of your due. If you are going to drink a great wine, you should be told that



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CHARLES PETRIE.

THE NATURE PAINTER

THE RAINBOW: A PORTRAIT OF JOHN CONSTABLE. By Andrew Shirley. *Michael Joseph.* 15*s.*

FATE bestowed two generous gifts upon John Constable. The first, to be born a miller's son in an exquisite part of England. The second to be given the vision to see the full beauty around him. As he himself said "... those scenes made me a painter". Added were the abounding energy which is half of what is called genius and the skill essential to expression.

All this, intimately related to the details of his family life, is told with insight and sympathy by Mr. Shirley who is unusally equipped for the task. I can think of no book on a painter which reveals its subject work and personality more vividly and sanely. The inevitability of Constable's achievement is made very clear. His search for a means to interpret the moods of Nature, and of the English landscape in particular, was almost religious in its intensity. Being a serious and conscientious innovator he had to bear with misunderstanding and disparagement but was sustained by his fierce resolve literally to shed light on landscape painting. And he lived to see his efforts appreciated.

Not the least interesting chapter in the book is that devoted to a consideration of Constable's influence on French painting. Mr. Shirley's judicial conclusions on this subject are hard to resist although they may be unpalatable to those who prefer to think that the influence invariably works in the opposite direction across the Channel. The opinions of Delacroix and, later, of Paul Signac are rebutting evidence which carries no little weight.

SYDNEY J. MAIDEN.

DICKENS

DICKENS: HIS CHARACTER, COMEDY, AND CAREER. By Hesketh Pearson. *Methuen and Co.* 18*s.*

THOMAS CARLYLE, once tempted into the unwonted dissipation of attending a Dickens reading "to the complete upsetting of my evening habitudes and spiritual composure" saw in it " a whole tragic, comic, heroic theatre visible, performing under one hat".

This too was an epitome of Dickens—on the stage of the world, as Mr. Hesketh Pearson has most skilfully shown. What an infinite variety of parts Dickens played! We see him as lover, sometimes an illicit one, husband, father, friend; also as a great novelist, playwright—in a minor way, actor, orator, practical joker, pedestrain, journalist, and traveller. Almost everything by turns and some of them for long. One asks whether any literary personality was more virile and versatile than Boz? Perhaps some mermidons of the Mermaid tavern in Elizabethan times, but we know so little of their hectic careers that comparison is impossible. Like his contemporary Walter Savage Landor—Dickens gave his name to one of his sons—he warmed both hands at the fire of life and burned himself out in the process.

We are here given that complete man Thackeray said he dared not portray in *Pendennis.* "Dickens enjoyed life, as all first-rate artists do, and responded to its multifarious emotions, wholly and impulsively." The result of Mr. Pearson's inspired labour is the most life-like portrait of Dickens that has appeared; a biography as fascinating as some of the novels. He has had many predecessors —John Forster, Percy Fitzgerald, F. G. Kitton, Ralph Straus, Thomas Wright, Dame Una Pope-Hennessy, but Hesketh Pearson leads all the rest.

WILLIAM KENT.

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